LORD ROSEBERY AND SCOTTISH NATIONALISM 1868 - 1896

ROBERT JOHN AKROYD

Submitted for PH.D

THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

1996

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DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis has been composed entirely by myself and that it is a record of my own work and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

Robert J. Akroyd
March 1996

Abstract

In assessing and analysing Scottish nationalism in the late nineteenth century, this thesis concentrates on Archibald Philip, the 5th Earl of Rosebery (1847 - 1929). Rosebery, 'the uncrowned King of Scotland,' inspired a generation of Scots, yet he has been largely ignored in the study of Scottish history. His Scottish identity is a key in deciphering his enigmatic political career, and his Scottish connections help explain his rapid rise to prominence. This thesis endeavours to assign Rosebery to his rightful place in the history of his native Scotland and to provide a balanced study of late 19th century Scottish nationalism.

This thesis has three aims. First, Rosebery's career is presented and analysed with special regard to Scotland. Scotland gave him a base of support and a springboard to power and prestige. In return, he secured attention for Scottish issues and a measure of legislation to redress imbalances. Secondly, Scottish nationalism during Rosebery's prime (1868 - 1896) is presented and evaluated. This period represents an essential chapter in the history of Scottish nationalism, but to date it has received relatively scant attention. The unsuccessful efforts to secure Scottish Home Rule and to disestablish the Church of Scotland demonstrated both the strength and the fragility of Scottish nationalism. A summary of the national movements in Ireland and Wales is presented to provide a proper context for the discussion of Scottish nationalism. Finally, the dissertation draws together these two strands to examine Rosebery's impact on nationalism - particularly in Scotland - and the influence of national movements on Rosebery's career.

To achieve these three objectives, the thesis has been structured in the following way. After a brief introduction, chapter 2 sketches Rosebery's early career concentrating on the personal and intellectual influences which shaped and defined his political identity. During the 1870s and 1880s, Rosebery forged an extensive political machine in Scotland which propelled him into prominence. Chapter 3 concludes Rosebery's political biography by focusing on his rapid rise to the premiership and his long political decline. His literary career is also addressed. Chapter 4 provides a discussion of the general theory of nationalism followed by an overview of Irish, Welsh and Scottish nationalism in the late nineteenth century. In chapter 5, Rosebery's efforts on behalf of Scotland's national cause are delineated. In addition to securing the restoration of the Secretaryship of Scotland in 1885, Rosebery reminded Britain of Scotland's distinct heritage and her contributions to the forging of Great Britain and the Empire. His achievements were both tangible and symbolic. Chapter 6 traces Rosebery's reaction to Irish and Welsh national demands, focusing on his response to the most volatile issue of his era: Irish Home Rule. Chapter 7 presents and analyses Rosebery's political ideology in general and his national ideology in particular - two subjects which have been largely neglected. Finally, chapter 8 concludes the thesis and evaluates Rosebery as a nationalist and a Scottish patriot.

Soli Deo Gratia, Soli Deo Gloria

Acknowledgements

My gratitude overflows. It is impossible to list all who have aided me in this endeavour. I owe a debt of gratitude and love - that I can never repay - to my parents for their encouragement and support. I am grateful to my supervisor, Owen Dudley Edwards, who has made this dissertation a sincere joy and a pleasure. He has been unfailing in his support, assistance and inspiration. Many thanks are due to my secondary supervisor John Simpson for his comments and suggestions upon my work throughout its composition. Donald Rutherford has been a faithful and insightful critic and proofreader who has spurred me on to think more carefully and write more concisely. My dear friend, Kay Tisdall, has encouraged and assisted me more than she will know and for her unlimited enthusiasm and optimism, I am grateful. I would like to thank my many friends in Edinburgh and at home for their encouragement and prayerful support.

I would also like to thank the staff and post-graduates of the Scottish History and History Departments at the University of Edinburgh. Their company and conversation has been both enjoyable and stimulating. I have benefited too from the aid and assistance from many Libraries and research centres including the University of Edinburgh Library, the British Library, the Bodleian Library, Churchill College Cambridge Library, the West Sussex Record Office, and the Clwyd Record Office. I am especially grateful to the staff at the National Library of Scotland, particularly the invigilators of the Manuscript reading room. I thank the present Earl and Countess of Rosebery, Sir William Gladstone, the Trustees of Chatsworth House for their assistance in providing access to unpublished manuscript materials.

Finally, I wish to thank Heather for her help, encouragement and love. She has made it possible for me to complete this work while having the time of my life.

Abbreviations

Rosebery	= Except where otherwise specified Rosebery refers to Archibald Philip Primrose, 5th Earl of Rosebery. Officially, from 1847 to 1851, he was the Hon. Archibald Philip Primrose, from 1851 to 1868 he was known by his courtesy title, Lord Dalmeny.
ENSLA	= East and North of Scotland Liberal Association
FC	= Free Church of Scotland
GP	= Gladstone Papers, British Library
HLLRA	= Highland Land Law Reform Association
LCC	= London County Council
NAVSR	= National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights
NLFS	= National Liberal Federation of Scotland
NLS	= National Library of Scotland
RP	= Rosebery Papers, National Library of Scotland
SHR	= Scottish Historical Review
SLA	= Scottish Liberal Association
SNP	= Scottish National Party
SHRA	= Scottish Home Rule Association
UF	= United Free Church
UP	= United Presbyterian Church

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1. Introduction

> There is no remembrance of men of old,
> and even those who are yet to come
> will not be remembered
> by those who follow.
> Ecclesiastes, chapter 1, verse 11 (New International Version)

I propose to reclaim Archibald Philip Primrose, the fifth Earl of Rosebery (1847 - 1929) to Scottish history. By focusing on his career, I plan to analyse Scottish nationalism from 1868 to 1896. His prominence and influence were unparalleled and persisted long after he became a political irrelevance. Yet, Lord Rosebery's posthumous reputation is not enviable. He has been relegated to the dust heap of history and he is little remembered in the country where he was most prominent. Apart from an engraved stone on Lady Stair's House[1] in Edinburgh and a bronze bust in the National Library of Scotland, there is little to remind Scots today of their great native-son. Rosebery is the subject of two learned biographies,[2] and he is remembered as a short-term and singularly unsuccessful Prime Minister, a great Foreign Secretary without any memorable feat of diplomacy, a devotee of the turf with three Derby victories, and a writer of works of history that were popular but not definitive. Yet upon closer inspection, the charm, lustre, and attraction that have dimmed over these last 67 years are not yet fully extinguished. "Can these dry bones live?"[3]

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[1] In recognition of his connection with Edinburgh, Gladstone restored the Mercat Cross. Following this example, Rosebery restored Lady Stair's House in 1897 and presented it to the people of Edinburgh.

[2] The Marquess of Crewe, K.G., Lord Rosebery (2 vols., London, 1931) and Robert Rhodes James, Rosebery: A Biography of Archibald Philip, Fifth Earl of Rosebery, (London, 1963). The best contemporary biography is E. T. Raymond's The Life of Lord Rosebery (New York, 1923) which was published in Britain under the more striking title, The Man of Promise, Lord Rosebery (London, 1923). Hereafter, these works will be referred to as Crewe, Rhodes James and Raymond respectively.

[3] Ezekiel, chapter 37, verses 2 - 3. This was the text of a sermon written by Rosebery and delivered by Canon William Rogers [Crewe, vol. ii, p. 387]. It is not doubted that Rosebery prepared a discourse on this text, but Crewe's reference is in error. He dates the delivery of this address to be Ash Wednesday, March 2, 1892,at St Paul's Cathedral, London. However,

A century ago, Rosebery was the driving force behind the national memorial to Robert Louis Stevenson in St Giles Cathedral,

> The people of course are as they always were indifferent to R.L.S. and think this confounded 'art' an absurdity. They were at the meeting because Lord R. was in the chair. There is a fierce enough local opposition to this thing, in influential circles, but they are afraid to speak out because his lordship is about ... There is no question that Lord Rosebery has done it all and I think courageously. He has his faults, but this is a real thing to his credit.[4]

Rosebery feared that Scotland would forget her gifted young author. Ironically, Stevenson is well-remembered, while Rosebery languishes in obscurity. However, no history of modern Scotland can be complete without considering the "Diogenes of Dalmeny."[5]

Thomas Carlyle proclaimed, "No great man lives in vain. The history of the world is but the history of great men."[6] From Wallace and Bruce, to

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on this date, Rogers preached on Philippians, chapter 3, verses 13 - 14 [The Times, March 3, 1892, p. 7] This sermon was also attributed to Rosebery [See Chapter 2].

[4] Viola Meynell (ed.), Letters of J. M. Barrie (London, 1942), pp. 11 - 12, letter from Barrie to Mrs Quiller-Couch dated December 11, 1896.

[5] Henry Lucy in his parliamentary diary, The Balfourian Parliament, 1901 - 1905 (London, 1906), pp. 97 - 98, coined this memorable phrase based on Rosebery's letter to the City Liberal Club dated July 16, 1901. Rosebery had written, "I believe that there is a useful and uncoveted place in the Commonwealth for one who having held high office and having no desire to hold it again can speak his mind with absolute independence." Lucy had introduced the metaphor, "When Diogenes, visiting Athens, offered himself as a disciple of Antisthenes, that estimable cynic, it is recorded, used his stick upon the new comer. 'Strike me, Antisthenes,' said Diogenes, with the calm dignity that pertains to the favourite character, 'but never shall you find a stick sufficiently hard to remove me from your presence whilst there is anything to be learned, any information to be gained, from your conversation and acquaintance.' It will probably be found on reference to the original that in the hurry or ignorance of the translator the personal pronoun has been mixed up. What Diogenes more probably said was, 'Whilst there is anything to be learned, any information to be gained from my conversation and acquaintance.'"

[6] Quoted in Michael J. Winstanley, Gladstone and the Liberal Party (London, 1990), p. 70.

Knox and Mary,[7] to Hume and Smith, to Scott and Burns, a succession of great Scots shaped and defined the nation's history. Rosebery was such a man and to understand Rosebery, I believe that an explicitly Scottish angle is essential. Consequently, studying Rosebery provides a foundation for better understanding Scotland in the late 19th century.

The historical remains of a man are but a hollow shell of what once was. For Rosebery, the two hundred and fifty manuscript volumes at the National Library of Scotland[8] are slim mementos of a spokesman for a nation. On the platform, he wielded a power that few in a century command. His speeches contained a spark, which he could ignite into a roaring blaze with a deft combination of eloquent diction, impish humour, cutting and well aimed sarcasm all polished by scholarly erudition. He clothed the thoughts, aspirations and fears of the common man in an eloquence which never failed to captivate or to elevate. An Edinburgh University student noted, "as an orator, Lord Rosebery has no living equal ... Like a bottle of old vintage wine [his speeches] are carefully decanted so as to please at once the most fastidious of connoisseurs, and arrest the attention of the careless."[9]

However, great oratory, like the fame of the orator, fades over time.[10] In his monograph on Lord Randolph Churchill(**),[11] Rosebery noted,

> No one reads old speeches any more than old sermons. The industrious historian is compelled to explore them for the purposes of

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[7] William Robertson Nicoll noted (People and Books (London, 1926), p. 181) that Scots "can admire John Knox and Mary Queen of Scots ... a feat impossible to other nations."

[8] See Appendix 3 for my comments on the Rosebery Papers.

[9] The Student [University of Edinburgh], November 3, 1898, p. 47.

[10] Owen Dudley Edwards has suggested that "the greatest oratory ... perished after utterance precisely because that was what made it the greatest oratory," in "American Oratory," Journal of American History, vol. 16 (1982), p. 454.

[11] All names which are marked (**) are given a brief biography in Appendix 1.

> political history but it is a dreary and a reluctant pilgrimage. The more brilliant and telling they were at the time, the more dolorous the quest. The lights are extinguished, the flowers are faded, the voice seems cracked across the empty space of years. It sounds like a message from a remote telephone. One wonders if that can really be the scene that fascinated and inspired, was this the passage we thought so thrilling, this the epigram that seemed to tingle, this the peroration that evoked such a storm of cheers? It all seems as flat as decanted champagne.[12]

Much of Rosebery's fame is now inexplicable. The great voice is stilled; a mere echo remains.

After he severed his party ties in 1896, Rosebery, the self-appointed voice of reason, marked the great milestones in British history with addresses and manifestos. In 1909, he defended his interference over the 'People's Budget,' because "the position that I have held in the confidence of my sovereign and the country could not allow my absolute silence at a moment like this."[13] In 1914, H. H. Asquith(**) spoke at Edinburgh's Usher Hall to rally the nation and encourage enlistment,

> At the close of the meeting at Edinburgh on the 18th September, addressed by the Prime Minister, there was a movement on the part of the audience to disperse, but when Lord Rosebery rose from his seat in the grand tier, and made his way up the gangway leading to the exit, he was greeted with loud cheers and cries of "Speech" from every part of the hall. His lordship hesitated and turned at the exit, and the cries of the audience became even more insistent. Amid great cheering, Lord Rosebery descended the stairs again, and facing the audience said, "I am not on the programme and I advise you to keep the programme and to go home to bed. I have no right to intrude on you at all tonight."
>
> His Lordship again turned to leave but not before the audience once more gave overwhelming proof of their desire by a remembered

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[12] Rosebery, Lord Randolph Churchill, in John Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies: Literary and Historical of Lord Rosebery (2 vols., London, 1921), vol. i, p. 318. Hereafter referred to as Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies.

[13] Rosebery,"Speech at Glasgow," September 10, 1909,in The Scotsman, September 11, p.9.

> demonstration in which members of the platform party enthusiastically joined. "Speech, speech" resounded throughout the hall.
>
> "Well Gentlemen, I will" announced Lord Rosebery amid a storm of cheers and he stepped down to the balcony to address the meeting.[14]

Fifty years after the event, a young man who had been in the audience remembered the scene vividly. His account gives a glimpse of the effect which Rosebery produced - a sensation which is lost in the standard 'lives.'

> What was once a meeting had become a crusade. I would have followed him anywhere. If he had called for volunteers that night to follow him into the trenches in France, I would have gone and I know that the rest of the audience would have too![15]

Rosebery had wealth, status, power, and intellect. Gladstone(**) honoured him as the man of the future, Scotland hailed him as her uncrowned but reigning king, and the Empire proclaimed him its first citizen. Yet, his actual accomplishments seem insignificant. He was in the Cabinet a mere 44 months. His name is not associated with any epoch-making measure and he bequeathed no political school of thought. But, political fame is often built on intangibles. Commentators have repeatedly focused on Rosebery's unfulfilled promise and wasted potential. To the common man, however, Rosebery held a hallowed position of authority which transcended mere politics. Like Chatham, Rosebery reserved the right "to influence politics by the sheer force of his personality."[16] Any politician can tout himself as the saviour of his country, but with Chatham and Rosebery, the nation validated

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[14] Rosebery's speeches throughout the Autumn of 1914 were reprinted in a cheap edition pamphlet, War! A Fight to the Finish, A Martial Call to the Scots by Lord Rosebery (Edinburgh, 1915), p. 13. In the same year, this pamphlet was reprinted in Gaelic to make it accessible to all Scots.

[15] I am indebted to Owen Dudley Edwards for this account which the eye-witness told him.

[16] Sir Almeric Fitzroy, Memoirs (2 vols., 6th ed., London [1928]), vol. i, p. 35, entry dated February 24th, 1900.

their grand claims.

Yet, Rosebery was not merely a wealthy orator who pranced across the political stage for a season. He exploited new methods and means to promote himself and his causes. Rosebery did not lack a political agenda: rather, he often sought too much rather than too little. Though he secured better government in Scotland and continuity in foreign affairs, his greater aims for the Empire were unfulfilled.

Many historical parallels can be drawn from Rosebery's career and personality. He was like Cincinnatus[17] - the Roman who heeded his nation's call to serve in an emergency but immediately retired to his farm after the crisis passed. The parallel breaks down because Cincinnatus was called twice and returned twice; Rosebery never returned: he remained "the retired raven on the withered bough."[18] Yet the raven, as in Poe's poem, was never prone to silence. Rosebery realised that a talented but unrestrained speaker was a volatile quantity,

> Independence in a public man is, we think, a quality as splendid as it is rare. But it is apt to produce and develop acute angles. Now a colleague with angles is a superfluous discomfort. And independence in a great orator on the Treasury bench is a rocket of which one cannot predict the course.[19]

There is also a parallel between Rosebery and the exiled Stuart kings. Just as eyes were turned to the king 'across the water,' expectant eyes were

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[17] Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus was a (possibly mythical) Roman statesman and dictator, whose career and character were described in Livy III.xxvi, "the sole hope of the Empire of the Roman people, Lucius Quinctius, cultivated a field of some four acres."

[18] This was Rosebery's description of himself in his last speech to the Liberal League in 1909, quoted in Rhodes James, p. 463. The final Liberal League meeting with Rosebery in attendance was on September 20, 1909; the brief report in The Times [September 21, p. 10] did not however record Rosebery's speech so Rhodes James' citation is used.

[19] Rosebery, "William Windham," in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, p. 158.

focused on Rosebery who seemed to be a paragon of sage wisdom. It seemed that the rightful 'king' was not ruling.

> Dalmeny became a St Germains, and it was long before the dream of a Rosebery restoration was quite banished. In the meanwhile, the plotters behaved much like the Jacobites. They affected loyalty to the *de facto* King while betraying all his secrets to the exile.[20]

Rosebery gave the nation someone to look to, even though it was a hope against reason. Critics and malcontents rallied round Rosebery because he was removed from the mundane drudgery of politics in a romantic yet accessible exile.

While Rosebery's wanderings in the political wilderness are intriguing, his active career is the focus of this study. His political prime coincides with a period of growing national awareness in Scotland. This was no coincidence. His love for his country was unbounded, but his connection to Scotland went beyond patriotism; "Not once, or twice but many times has he on critical occasions stood forth as the spokesman of his countrymen north of the Tweed."[21] Rosebery won attention for Scotland's needs and partial redress of her complaints. While Rosebery's Scottish identity has been forgotten, Scottish nationalism in the late 19th century has been largely overlooked.

Rosebery recognised the need to study Scottish history as distinguished from British history and in keeping with this ethos, Rosebery will be viewed primarily in a Scottish context. The main concentration of this thesis is on the years 1868 to 1896. The year 1868 marked the beginning of Gladstone's first ministry and Rosebery's elevation to the House of Lords, and 1896 marked Rosebery's resignation from the leadership of the Liberal Party. These dates

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[20] Raymond, p. 181. St Germains was the location of the exiled Jacobite Court in France.

[21] This was how Provost Mackie of Leith introduced Rosebery at the dedication of a statue to Queen Victoria in Leith on October 12, 1907, in The Scotsman, October 14, p. 10.

provide reasonable parameters to study Rosebery's career and the course of Scottish nationalism.

Since the 1960s, the national question has dramatically reemerged in Scotland, exciting popular emotions and encouraging scholarly debate. Conferences, monographs, dissertations, conventions and political parties have all attempted to define Scotland's national identity and chart its development. As with most emotive issues, consideration of the present can often blur the perception of the past. Most studies of Scottish nationalism favour the more explicitly national movements after the First World War. Yet, the 1880s and 1890s were a period of transition and conflict in Scottish politics. Seeds were sown that later bore fruit. A coherent narrative and analysis of nationalism in Scotland from the Second Reform Bill to Rosebery's resignation is required. The expansion of the electorate and the increase in parliamentary representation coincided with Rosebery's rise as a Scottish spokesman. These factors facilitated a wider discussion of Scottish national questions within the context of Great Britain and the Empire. Also, Scotland secured tangible victories that were largely due to Rosebery's intervention.

Two pitfalls are immediately apparent in studying Scottish nationalism in this period. First, 19th-century Scottish nationalism can be weighed in Irish scales, and in this balance be found wanting. Irish Nationalists commanded centre stage at Westminster for more than a generation. By comparison to the convulsive history of Ireland, events in Scotland seemed mild and tame. Secondly, Scottish nationalism in the nineteenth century can be judged by the standards of the 20th century. In recent decades, Scottish national demands have been expressed, at least partly, through the Scottish National Party, which advocates independence rather than devolution. In the 1880s and 1890s, Scotland did not desire independence nor did it have a distinct party. Again by these unrealistic standards, Scottish nationalism in the late Victorian period seems primitive. Both of these paths are false and

fruitless. Just as it is essential to place Rosebery within his age, nationalism must be placed in its proper geographical and chronological context.

Considering Scottish nationalism at this time, two essential questions follow. First, did Scottish nationalism exist in any considerable form? Most Scots were deeply devoted to their homeland, particularly if they lived furth of Scotland.[22] Generally, nationalism was expressed within institutions such as the Liberal Party and the church rather than through separate organisations. Explicitly nationalistic organisations were neither representative nor significant. However, over this period, Scotland's national awareness grew and was manifest in politics, religion, education and the arts. In politics, Scottish Home Rule and Disestablishment were significant nationalistic movements even though they proved unsuccessful.

Secondly, was Rosebery a nationalist? Rosebery was typical of most Scots in that he considered himself a Scottish patriot. However, Rosebery, more than anyone in his generation, was able to translate his love for Scotland into tangible advances for Scotland's national cause. His patriotism moved him to concerted and consistent action. In a career which appeared dominated by prevarication and vacillation, Rosebery's Scottish agenda was perennial. Not only did Rosebery seek redress, he secured redress. Scotland's debt to him is great. Rosebery's career will be analyzed with regard to Scottish national questions to determine how far Rosebery can be considered a Scottish nationalist.

The thesis addresses Lord Rosebery and Scottish nationalism in the following way,

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[22] See the chapter, "The Scot Abroad," in Robert Louis Stevenson's The Silverado Squatters (London, 1895), p. 51, "The happiest lot on Earth is to be born a Scotchman. You must pay for it in many ways, as for all other advantages on Earth."

Chapter 2 provides a biographical sketch of Rosebery's early years (1847 - 1880) focusing on the influences which shaped his political identity and enabled him to forge a political machine in Scotland.

Chapter 3 concludes his political biography and includes a discussion of his literary career and other varied interests which occupied his attention during his three decades of retirement.

Chapter 4 provides a brief discussion of nationalism followed by a summary of Irish, Welsh and Scottish national movements in the late 19th century.

Chapter 5 delineates Rosebery's efforts on behalf of Scotland. Rosebery reminded Britain of Scotland's heritage and her great contributions to the Empire. He achieved tangible and symbolic victories.

Chapter 6 traces Rosebery's reaction to Irish and Welsh national demands, focusing on his response to the most volatile issue of his era: Irish Home Rule.

Chapter 7 presents and analyses Rosebery's political ideology which culminated in his comprehensive vision of the Empire.

Chapter 8 concludes the thesis and evaluates Rosebery's position as a Scottish nationalist.

2. Rosebery, The Man Who Would be King, 1847 - 1880

> [He was] the most representative Scotsman of his times ... Today do we remember and remembering are proud and thankful how greatly he loved Scotland and how greatly Scotland gave its love to him. Raised to an unchallenged supremacy in this people's affection; for two generations he reigned among us as the recognised spokesman of our brave and rugged land, the alert and jealous guardian of its traditions, the indomitable champion of its interests.[1]

Rosebery's fame, particularly in Scotland, was not based simply on his accomplishments in office, because this eulogy was delivered by a man born four years prior to Rosebery's final resignation from politics. To understand how Rosebery achieved a prominence in Britain and a preeminence in Scotland, a detailed review of his life is essential. In particular, the influences upon his character, and his carefully orchestrated rise to national prominence require a more detailed treatment.

To weave the tapestry of a life from the existing strands of fact is a frustrating and often disappointing endeavour. The resulting fabric is uneven, with obvious holes and imperfections. Rosebery noted the challenge facing the future historian of his own age, "While history up to the sixteenth century suffers from scarcity of evidence, the history of our own times will suffer much more from a suspicious amplitude of material; the years of plenty will be worse than the years of famine."[2] From the Victorian era, reminiscences, biographies and memoirs of the famous and the obscure, line many dusty library shelves. With regard to Rosebery, the contemporary accounts, though helpful and sometimes revealing, raise far more questions than they succeed in answering. A. G. Gardiner - Rosebery's erstwhile

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[1] The eulogy delivered at St Giles, on May 25, 1929, by the Very Reverend Charles L. Warr (1892 - 1969), Dean of the Order of the Thistle in The Scotsman, May 27, p. 11.

[2] Rosebery, "Aberdeen Rectorial Address," November 5, 1880, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 46.

political ally and Harcourt's biographer - remarked,

> He was endowed with all the elements of greatness, but the elements were not enough. They must be compounded into unity by that indefinable something, constant and purposeful, which we call character, and it is the quality of character which Lord Rosebery lacks. And lacking that he lacks all. His gifts are idle ornaments; his life a drama without a sequence and without a theme.[3]

His close friend Edward Hamilton(**), Gladstone's private secretary, confided,

> I have known him intimately for 23 years ... Yet, I have never really understood him. He is an extraordinary mixture. He has brilliant abilities and in many ways special aptitude for political life; but I fear his over-sensitive, thin-skinned nature will sadly stand in the way of a really successful political future.[4]

Yet the man here described went on to become Foreign Secretary (twice) and Prime Minister. Rosebery has been likened to Hamlet, that flawed hero who is remembered for what he did not do rather than for the great amount that he actually accomplished.[5] Alas, no one character defect neatly explains Rosebery's failures, just as no one conspicuous asset accounts for his meteoric rise.

In reviewing the major biographies of Rosebery, certain key questions were either left unanswered or were never asked. The progression from a Scottish peer, to a junior minister, to Foreign Secretary, to Prime Minister is neither ordinary nor inevitable. Rosebery was hailed from his youth as a potential Prime Minister, but these predictions are not explanations.

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[3] A. G. Gardiner, Prophets, Priests and Kings (London, 1908), p. 278.

[4] Arthur Ponsonby, Henry Ponsonby: Queen Victoria's Private Secretary (London, 1942), p. 275, Sir Edward Hamilton to Sir Henry Ponsonby dated [June] 1883.

[5] Raymond noted [p. 242] "Lord Rosebery, a Hamlet of Politics, died like Hamlet in the play, with political corpses of his making all round him."

Crewe(**) and Rhodes James clearly mark his path to power, but they give scant treatment to the means and methods by which this path was discovered and travelled. Rosebery was a brilliant man, but few brilliant men ever become Prime Minister and few Prime Ministers are brilliant men. Rosebery had access to the avenues of power, but far more privileged men have faded into obscurity. Conversely, while his early career is neglected, undue attention is given to what he might have done, rather than to his actual achievements.

The primary weakness of Lord Crewe's Rosebery is also its greatest strength. As Rosebery's son-in-law and close friend, Crewe was uniquely qualified to write the biography, but this familiarity tended to blunt his criticisms of Rosebery's behaviour. Crewe's inscription is revealing, "To My Wife, This attempt to tell the story of one we both loved." The biography is well written, incorporating relevant primary documents, but it lacks that spark for which Rosebery's own prose was noted. Alas Crewe was no Boswell: Rosebery's brilliant conversation is lost. In fairness, as a first attempt at biography, Crewe faced a difficult project. This challenge was compounded by the scattered source material. By Crewe's admission, the Rosebery papers were poorly organised, while many of the relevant archives of other statesmen were completely or partially restricted. Also, Crewe knew Rosebery best during his twilight years which were not representative of his life. Though worthy of our attention, Crewe's Rosebery remains an ordinary life of an extraordinary man.

By contrast, Robert Rhodes James had greater access to source material and was not limited by filial piety. His biography refines and expands upon Crewe's work, without offering a drastic reinterpretation. Rhodes James often combines documentary material with psychological interpretations hoping to

shed light on the dark recesses of Rosebery's psyche.[6] These attempts while interesting are little more than conjecture, and tend to mar the scholarship rather than enhance it. As a biography, it is clever but rarely profound. The writing is lucid and the conclusions are plausible, but it seems inconceivable, based on this account, that Rosebery could ever have been taken seriously. Rhodes James concluded his analysis, "here lies one who meant well, tried a little, failed much. Surely that may be his epitaph, of which he need not be ashamed."[7] This was a man to be pitied and even ridiculed, not a man to be followed and lionized. Rhodes James leaves pivotal questions - such as why did Rosebery retreat from Irish Home Rule - unanswered, while seeking to answer the imponderable.[8]

Rosebery's papers, particularly his many manuscript notes and reflections, present many challenges to all of Rosebery's biographers. It would of course be naive to accept these musings without consideration, but likewise it would rash to reject them out of hand. Both Crewe and Rhodes James mention a half-sheet of notepaper in which Rosebery claimed "that from the first his main fault had been Pride,"[9] and then they each summarily dismiss Rosebery's analysis in favour of their own wisdom. Crewe suggests that "it might be safer to fix on self-consciousness as his bane,"[10] while Rhodes James contends that his undoing was caused by "the streak of Stanhope irresponsibility in his personality and the absence of any element

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[6] For example, assessing Hannah's influence, Rhodes James [p. 491] maintained that Rosebery's character required "sympathy and patience, which his wife supplied. It is not fanciful to trace in Rosebery's relations with Gladstone and the Queen a desire for a similar sympathy and comprehension." I would humbly contend that such an interpretation is more fanciful than factual.

[7] Rhodes James, p. 492.

[8] For example, Rhodes James, p. 489, "the question must needs be asked, what was he doing in politics at all." This question cannot be answered, and need not be asked.

[9] Crewe, vol. ii, p. 659 and Rhodes James, p. 48. I have been unable to locate this sheet in the Rosebery papers. It may have been privately retained by the Rosebery family at Dalmeny House.

[10] Crewe, vol. ii, p. 659.

of struggle in his earlier years."[11] Neither biographer sought to explain what Rosebery meant by this note. One could imagine Rosebery reading these accounts and composing a witty response to indicate that his powers of self analysis were at least worthy of some humble consideration.

In addition to the standard lives, E. T. Raymond's[12] The Life of Lord Rosebery (1923) is noteworthy for its crisp style and searching observations. Though lacking access to primary materials, Raymond provides the modern student with many humorous and perceptive quotations. For example,

> Lord Rosebery imagined that having sounded the well of his own thoughts and found (as he believed) truth at the bottom, it was his privilege, and even his duty, to display the interesting captive in public, though she should be as embarrassing to his modest followers as another Lady Godiva.[13]

While some of his conclusions are hyperbolic, Raymond opens a valuable window to view Rosebery.

Reviewing the contemporary works of history and biography, the Victorians clearly understood history differently than we do today. This caveat applies to Rosebery who was not only a subject for biographers but a biographer himself.[14] He was a Whig in his political upbringing and firmly Whiggish as a historian. The Whig view of history as an onward and upward progression has been sufficiently challenged by academics and the events of

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[11] Rhodes James, p. 48.

[12] E. T. Raymond (the pseudonym of Edward Raymond Thompson (1872 -1928)) edited the Evening Standard (1923 - 28). He wrote many works of contemporary history including Portraits of the Nineties (1921) and Disraeli: the Alien Patriot (1925).

[13] Raymond, p. 137.

[14] His most significant works are Pitt (London, 1891), Sir Robert Peel (London, 1899), Napoleon: The Last Phase (London, 1900), Lord Randolph Churchill (London, 1906), and Chatham: His Early Life and Connections (London, 1910). Peel and Lord Randolph Churchill were republished in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies and my citations are taken from this edition.

the twentieth century.[15] The late Victorian period, despite its wars and glaring social problems, was an age which largely radiated hope, faith, and optimism.[16] Rosebery's adherence to this viewpoint remained consistent despite his political oscillations.[17] It was a creed which he inherited in his youth which coloured his thoughts, writings and speeches.

Prologue 1847 - 1868

Ancestry

Rosebery, the man who married an heiress, became Prime Minister and won the Derby,[18] had noble maternal and paternal pedigrees. As a breeder of horses, Rosebery knew that a good blood line does not guarantee the quality of the progeny, but invariably when a winner is bred there is an interest in its lineage. In Chatham, Rosebery asserted, "there is one initial part of a biography which is skipped by every judicious reader; that in which the pedigree of the hero is set forth, often with warm fancy, and sometimes at

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[15] Notably Herbert Butterfield, The Whig Interpretation of History (London, 1931).

[16] Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach," however, presented a darker view of the age,
"Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night."
in R. A. Scott-James (ed.), Matthew Arnold's Poems (London, 1955), p. 86.

[17] In his Glasgow Rectorial Address, on November 16, 1900, Rosebery described the 19th century as "an era of emancipation, considerable though not complete. Nations as a rule have been sorted into boundaries more consonant with their aspirations and traditions than was formerly the case. The tyranny of sects, in Britain at any rate, has partially abated. The undue pressure of government has diminished. Slavery has disappeared. All over the world, there have been great strides towards freedom; and, though inadequate, they have been so considerable as to produce for a moment an apathy of self-satisfaction," in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 245.

[18] This prediction, attributed to Rosebery at Eton, is most likely apocryphal.

intolerable length."[19] In reality, he well knew that ancestry and family connections were of great import. Rosebery's paternal forbears were Scottish, Royalist [prior to 1688], and Whig [after 1707] while his maternal inheritance was English, Tory, and idiosyncratic.[20]

In the ancient Scots peerage, the earldom of Rosebery, created in 1703, was new. From the sixteenth century, the Primroses owed their prosperity and position to the Stuart dynasty in Scotland. Royalism, however, was perilous during the seventeenth century and led to divided loyalties in the eighteenth century. In a debauched age, the Primroses were noteworthy for their infidelity, insanity, profligacy, treason and conspiracy. Not surprisingly, Rosebery rejected all efforts to publish a family history; he was embarrassed by his forebears' notoriety.

The first noteworthy Primrose was **James Primrose (1570 - 1641)**, a key figure in King James VI's Government in Scotland, who held the prestigious position of Clerk of the Privy Council. He was succeeded in this post in 1641 by his son, [later Sir] **Archibald Primrose (1616 - 1679)**. During the convulsive 1640s and 1650s, Archibald boldly cast his lot with Charles I and later Charles II. He fought under the Marquis of Montrose, and was taken prisoner by the forces of Parliament at Philiphaugh in 1646. He was deprived of office in 1649, and had his land confiscated in 1651. Following the Restoration in 1660, his loyalty was rewarded and his fortunes were restored. Sir Archibald was married twice. The progeny of his first marriage were ennobled as the Viscounts Primrose and tended to support the Jacobite cause

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[19] Rosebery, Chatham: His Early Life and Connections, p. 1.

[20] Unless otherwise noted, biographical details for the Primroses and Stanhopes are from The Scots Peerage, The Complete Peerage and Aubrey Newman's The Stanhopes of Chevening (London, 1969).

during the 18th century.[21]

Archibald Primrose (1664 - 1723), the eldest son of Sir Archibald's second marriage, soon came into conflict with the ill-fated James VII/II and in 1688, he backed William and Mary. In 1700, he was created Viscount Rosebery and Lord Primrose and Dalmeny and in 1703, he was promoted in the Scots peerage to Earl of Rosebery, Viscount of Inverkeithing and Lord Dalmeny and Primrose. The nearness of this promotion to the Union of 1707 was not coincidental. The first earl was one of the commissioners for the Treaty of Union, and following the Union, he was selected as a representative Scottish peer in 1708, 1710, and 1713.

James Primrose (1690 - 1755), 2nd Earl of Rosebery, was beset with two serious disabilities: periodic insanity and the propensity to sue his family. He dissipated the family fortune. Nonetheless, James allied himself to the most powerful family in Scotland, by marrying Mary Campbell the sister of the 4th Duke of Argyll. The second earl left his son, **Neil Primrose (1729 - 1814), 3rd Earl of Rosebery**, to repair the damage. He restored the family fortunes using well-tried means: he married an heiress, Susan Ward of Norfolk. He was a representative peer in 1768, 1774, and 1780, and was made a Knight of the Thistle in 1771.

Archibald John Primrose (1783 - 1868), 4th Earl of Rosebery was an

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[21] A grandson of Sir Archibald Primrose, Sir Archibald Foulis Primrose was implicated in the '45 and executed on November 15, 1746. Sir Archibald is listed in the volume which Rosebery presented to the Scottish History Society in 1890. "Sir Archibald Primrose of Dunipace - A baronet, son of George Foulis, of the family of Ravelston, who assumed the name Primrose in terms of entail. He was captured near Aboyne in July 1746 was tried at York, pleaded guilty, and executed at Carlisle on 15 November 1746," in A List of Persons concerned in the Rebellion, 1st ser., vol. 8, Scottish History Society, (Edinburgh, 1890), p. 373. After the '45, Lady Anne Drelincourt Primrose, the widow of Hugh, 3rd Viscount Primrose, was a chief intriguer of Bonnie Prince Charlie's during the abortive Elibank Plot of 1750 - 1753. She received the disguised prince in her London home on September 16, 1750 [Frank McLynn, Charles Edward Stuart: A Tragedy in Many Acts (London, 1988), p. 396]. Her activities may have been unknown to Rosebery.

important influence on his grandson, the 5th Earl. After graduating from Cambridge in 1804, Archibald married Harriet Bouverie. In a sensational case which merited a dozen pages in the Annual Register of 1815, their marriage was dissolved on the charge of criminal conduct. The Countess committed adultery with the widower husband of her sister, Sir Henry Carew St. John Mildmay. The couple retreated to the Continent after paying the aggrieved earl £15,000. The fourth earl later married Anne, daughter of Viscount Anson. Rosebery's maternal grandmother was the first countess, whom he presumably never met. Though there was no blood relation, he was deeply attached to his 'Grandmama' - the second Countess. On her death on August 19, 1882, he lamented, "she who had loved me longest and whom I loved tenderly would no more be the centre and the point of contact of so many different persons whose only link was their affection for her."[22]

The fourth Earl was a Whig MP for Helstone [Cornwall] (1805 - 6) and Cashel [Ireland] (1806 - 7). After acceding to the earldom in 1814, he was a representative Scottish peer (1818, 1820, and 1826) and Lord Lieutenant of Linlithgowshire (1843 - 63). In 1828, he was created a peer of the United Kingdom as Baron Rosebery of Rosebery, alleviating him and his grandson from having to contend for one of the sixteen representative peerages. An ardent supporter of Lord Grey's Reform Bill, the fourth Earl was made a Privy Counsellor in 1831 and a Knight of the Thistle in 1840.

The fourth earl's first son, Archibald [Rosebery's father] will be discussed later. His second son, **Bouverie Francis Primrose (1813 - 1898)**, was the Secretary to the Board of Trustees and Management, and a member of the influential Edinburgh Philosophical Institution. Referring to his uncle, Rosebery described him as his "second father ... so well known and loved in

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[22] Crewe, vol. i, p. 162.

Edinburgh."[23] Bouverie helped to fill the void left by the death of Rosebery's father. As a young man, Rosebery visited his grandparents and uncle in Scotland which helped maintain his connection to Scotland.

Rosebery's ancestry also linked him to Scotland's romantic past. In his literary journals, he noted every mention of his ancestors. The Primroses were significant, but none were of primary importance and few were of the second rank. Nonetheless, connections with a martyr, an architect of the Union, or a statesman who fought 'for King and Covenant' solidified his sentimental view of Scotland's past, in which he had a real stake. The inheritance from father to son is difficult to quantify, and that of remote ancestors even more elusive, but it is certain that Rosebery took pride in his Scottish roots and considered himself a full Scot, even though by rights he was only a half-Scot.

Among his maternal ancestors were several prominent politicians and men of letters. With their motto - 'By God and the King' - the Stanhopes were intellectual and cultured, firmly established in the ruling elite of the English aristocracy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Stanhopes of Chevening were descended from the second marriage of **Philip Stanhope (1584 - 1656), 1st Earl of Chesterfield.** The most famous Stanhope was undoubtedly, **Philip Dormer Stanhope (1694 - 1773), 4th Earl of Chesterfield** - a politician and man of letters.[24] **James Stanhope (1673 - 1721),** a distant cousin to Chesterfield, was a military commander in the War of Spanish Succession and later Prime Minister to George I. He was an impetuous

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[23] Rosebery, "Address to the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution," November 25, 1898, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 209.

[24] Chesterfield was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1744 - 46) during the turbulent '45 and later became Secretary of State for the Northern Department (1746 - 48). He was a patron of the arts and a writer who is best remembered for his Letters to His Son (1774) which are considered a model of wit and charm. Dr. Johnson, who had been snubbed earlier by Chesterfield, remarked [quoted in The Complete Peerage [By G.E.C.], vol. iii, p. 183 n.] that the letters, "inculcated the morals of a strumpet and the manners of a dancing master."

soldier, but impatience coupled with stunning success (as seen in his expedition to Port Mahon in Minorca) secured him fame and power.

Stanhope was MP for the Isle of Wight (1702 and 1717), Cockermouth (1702 - 13 and 1715 - 17) and Wendover (1714 - 15). As a minister, he served as Secretary of State for the Southern Department (1714 -16), Secretary of State for the Northern Department (1716 - 17 and 1718 - 21), and First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer (1717 - 18). In 1717, he was created Baron Stanhope of Elvaston and Viscount Stanhope of Mahon. He purchased the estate at Chevening in 1717. Following a Cabinet reshuffle in 1718, he was promoted to the earldom. He died in February 1721 with a reputation as a soldier, politician, and minister who acted boldly and even rashly.

By contrast his son, **Philip Stanhope (1714 - 1786), 2nd Earl Stanhope,** was shy and retiring and lived much of his life in Germany. Though an active scientist, he was reluctant to publish his discoveries. Despite his father's example and having the elder Pitt as a cousin, Stanhope had little interest in politics.

Charles Stanhope (1753 - 1816), 3rd Earl Stanhope, ardently supported the French Revolution adopting the nickname, 'Citizen Stanhope.' He entered Parliament due to the patronage of Lord Shelburne and sat as an M.P. for Chipping Wycombe (1780 - 86). A first cousin and close ally of the younger Pitt, Mahon led the radical reformers in the House of Commons. He ardently opposed Fox. After entering the Lords in 1786, his close relations with Pitt ended and he became more eccentric and isolated.

With a full measure of Stanhope obstinacy, he was not afraid to adopt unpopular causes. He championed Catholic relief in 1791 claiming "that every man has a natural and inalienable right to Liberty of conscience, and that no man should be persecuted for his private opinions in matters of

religion."[25] Following the rejection of this bill, Stanhope entered his protest in the Journals of the House of Lords, inaugurating an oft-repeated ritual. He published A letter from Earl Stanhope to the Right Hon. Edmund Burke (1790) in which he supported the French Revolution. He later ardently opposed the war with France. In 1795, Stanhope's motion, "The country ought not to interfere in the internal affairs of France" was defeated by a margin of 60 - 1. In honour of this remarkable division, a 'Stanhope Medal' was coined with his portrait and the inscription "The Minority of One." Stanhope entered a fifteen - point protest in the House of Lords Journals and remained out of the House for five years.[26] After 1800, his interventions were less vehement and frequent.

Stanhope married Lady Hester Pitt, Pitt's sister, and following her death married Louisa Grenville niece of Lord Temple and George Grenville. Stanhope was such an autocrat at home that his son later sued him (Mahon v. Stanhope 1806 - 1812). Stanhope was a scientist of the first mark, experimenting in flameproofing, calculating machines, electricity, shipbuilding, printing and propulsion. However, his experiments and legal wrangles greatly depleted the family fortune.

In contrast to his father's radicalism, **Philip Henry Stanhope (1781 - 1855), 4th Earl Stanhope,** was strongly anti-French and an erratic Whig who grew more Conservative as he grew older. He voted against Roman Catholic Emancipation, for the Great Reform Act, and against the repeal of the Corn Laws. Describing himself as an ultra-Tory, he was MP for Windsor (1806 - 7), Hull (1807 - 12), and Midhurst (1812 - 16). The third earl's daughter, **Lady Hester Stanhope (1776 - 1839),** was one of the most celebrated eccentrics of

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[25] Newman, p. 149.

[26] Rosebery employed this same technique in 1911. See Chapter 3.

her age, and was the subject of a scholarly biography by Rosebery's mother.[27] She pursued a scandalous love affair which lasted several years, and travelled throughout the Middle East wearing men's clothes. Her religion was a unique mixture of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. As her self-delusions grew, her fortune dwindled.

The fourth Earl's son, **Philip Henry Stanhope (1805 - 1875), 5th Earl Stanhope,** was MP for Wootton Bassett (1830 - 2), and Hertford (1832 - 3 and 1835 - 52). He served as Under-Secretary to the Foreign Office (1834 - 35) and Joint Secretary of the India Board (1845 - 46). A Tory in principle, he followed the family tradition of political independence. From 1789 to 1875, the political allegiance of the Stanhopes swung from republicanism to a cautious whiggery to conservatism.

The fifth Earl is more notable for his literary than his political career. He wrote History of the War of the Succession in Spain (London, 1832),[28] History of England from the Peace of Utrecht to the Peace of Versailles 1713 - 1783 (7 vols., London, 1836 - 53), The Life of the Right Honourable William Pitt (4 vols., London, 1861 - 62), and The History of England Comprising the Reign of Queen Anne until the Peace of Utrecht (London, 1870). He was a meticulous scholar who carefully utilised primary documents, earning praise for his technique and his high research standards and laying the foundation of modern historical research. In his Spanish Succession and his multi-volume History of England, he included a section of extracts from primary documents. In 1852, he clashed with the American historian Jared Sparks. He accused Sparks of "tampering with the truth of history" in his publication

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[27] Duchess of Cleveland, Life and Letters of Lady Hester Stanhope (London, 1914).

[28] Macaulay gave this work a favourable review in his essay, "War of the Succession in Spain" which appeared in the January, 1833 issue of the Edinburgh Review. This inaugurated a friendship between the two historians.

of George Washington's letters.[29] Rosebery discovered his uncle's works when he was 12. For Rosebery - an aspiring historian - Stanhope was a fine model of diligent and mature scholarship.

Rosebery's Stanhope inheritance can be seen more clearly than his Primrose legacy. His political inheritance at first seems to be drawn from the 4th Earl of Rosebery's Whiggery, but even during the early stages of his career, there was an inclination towards radicalism. Rosebery was dubbed a 'Coroneted Socialist' and 'Citizen Rosebery' evoking images of 'Citizen Stanhope.' The Stanhope parallel was also apparent in Rosebery's later career when he moved from the political left to the right, becoming another eccentric 'minority of one.'

His Primrose ancestors were well versed in the art of government and the even more elusive skill of currying and maintaining favour in a rapidly changing political environment, but they were not intellectually significant. The Stanhopes were lettered and refined. During the formative years between his father's death in 1851 and his mother's remarriage in 1854, Rosebery was raised in the 5th Earl Stanhope's home (including the vast Stanhope Library), which was well suited to stimulate the boy's intellectual skills. He had a family heritage of scholarship to draw upon and perpetuate.

Parents

Rosebery was born into a home of wealth, privilege, and learning with every opportunity to grow and flourish. There were great expectations. On September 20, 1843, **Lady [Catherine Lucy] Wilhelmina Stanhope (1819 - 1901)**, one of the most captivating and learned women of her generation, married Lord Dalmeny. G. W. E. Russell noted that Rosebery's mother,

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[29] See Lord Mahon, Letter to Jared Sparks (London, 1852).

> spoke with an exquisite precision, both of utterance and of diction; she hardly uttered a sentence without giving it a turn which one remembered; and her inclination to sarcasm was not unduly restrained. She was born in a learned home, and had lived all her life with clever and educated people.[30]

This speaking ability (and inclination to sarcasm) was clearly seen in her eldest son. Benjamin Disraeli(**), a friend of the family, gave the following description after his visit to Raby Castle in August 1865,

> She has the quickest, and the finest, perception of humour I know, with an extraordinary power of expression, and the Stanhope wit; her conversation unceasing, but never long or wearying; a wondrous flow of drollery, information, social tattle, taste, eloquence; such a ceaseless flow of contemporary anecdote I never heard. And yet she never repeats.[31]

These qualities - especially the ability to captivate an audience - were soon seen in Rosebery. A woman of letters, whose society was eagerly sought, the Duchess of Cleveland wrote The History of Battle Abbey (1877), In Memory of Colonel the honourable Everard Henry Primrose [1886], The True Story of Kaspar Hauser: From Original Documents (1893) and The Life and Letters of Lady Hester Stanhope (1914).

Despite these lavish testimonials, Rhodes James asserts that Rosebery's mother "possessed the Stanhope failing of self-absorption,"[32] and he takes great pains to prove that her relationship to Rosebery was cold if not hostile. Caution, however, should be exercised, because the extant manuscript material and Crewe are both silent on this subject. Without evidence, a

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[30] G. W. E. Russell, Portraits of the Seventies (London, 1916), p. 454.

[31] W. F. Monypenny and G. E. Buckle, The Life of Benjamin Disraeli: Earl of Beaconsfield (New and Rev. ed. in 2 vols., London, 1929), vol. ii, p. 153. Note by Montagu Corry dated August 31, 1865.

[32] Rhodes James, p. 4.

historian can either concede ignorance or offer speculation. In this case, I must take the first option: Rhodes James opted for the second.

Even less is known of Rosebery's relationship with his father. **Archibald Primrose (1809 - 1851), Lord Dalmeny,** was a Whig MP for Stirling Burghs (1832 - 47) and a Lord of the Admiralty (1835 - 41). He published An Address to the Middle Classes upon the Subject of Gymnastic Exercises (1848) which is saved from oblivion only because the author's son became Prime Minister. Dalmeny was concerned that the physical weakness of the Middle Class imperilled the safety of the Empire; "the first crisis that occurs, by disclosing the hollowness of our strength and poverty of our spirit will ring the knell of our downfall, and be the signal of our perdition."[33] Dalmeny's eldest son inherited both this concern for the Empire as well as a didactic and preaching style. Father and son sought "to bring to light truths which were neglected."[34]

A glimpse of Rosebery's father is seen in the surviving correspondence of Tom Morrison, Andrew Carnegie's grandfather and a committed Dunfermline radical. Morrison repeatedly vented his pent up fury against the noble MP for the Stirling Burghs. He heckled Dalmeny in public and sent him a barrage of patronizing letters which began, "I will offer you a short advice and a little instruction," and continued with invective. On December 3, 1834, he gave a biased exegesis of Dalmeny's incompetence, "1st you are a Lord. The interests of Lords and commoners are not identical; they are different, nay opposite." Morrison concluded that Dalmeny's oratory was "defective in grammar wretched in composition, clumsy and ambiguous in style, and unmeaning as to idea or sentiment."[35]

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[33] Lord Dalmeny [Archibald Primrose], An Address to the Middle Classes upon the Subject of Gymnastic Exercises (2nd ed., London, 1848), p. 32.

[34] Lord Dalmeny, An Address to the Middle Classes, p. 46.

[35] Joseph F. Wall, Andrew Carnegie (Pittsburgh, 1989), pp. 28 - 29.

Dalmeny, like Gladstone, commenced his political career in 1832 in the aftermath of the Great Reform Act and at the beginning of the Ten Years' Conflict within the Church of Scotland. In Scotland the political landscape was fraught with pitfalls. Dalmeny alienated both the Radicals and the Evangelicals.[36] In one of his few speeches in Parliament, he opposed increasing the endowment of the Church of Scotland, which angered Evangelicals who adhered to vigorous church extension schemes.[37] The controversy over the Maynooth Grant in 1845[38] forged an Evangelical alliance between Free Churchmen[39] and the Voluntaries[40] and the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 caused the alliance between Whigs and Liberals to collapse. Dalmeny effectively ended his political career by supporting the Maynooth Grant. On April 28, 1845, in a far-reaching speech, he viewed Maynooth from an Imperial perspective, "I consider that its rejection would be fatal to the peace of Ireland and to the prosperity of the Empire."[41] He urged the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland and made the following

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[36] As noted in Mark A. Noll, David W. Bebbington and George A. Rawlyk (eds.), Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700 - 1990 (Oxford, 1994), introduction, p. 6, Evangelicalism in Britain has focused on the following four themes, "biblicism (a reliance on the Bible as ultimate religious authority), conversionism (a stress on the new birth [i.e. John, chapter 3, verses 3 - 8]), activism (an energetic, individualistic approach to religious duties and social involvement), and crucicentrism (a focus on Christ's redeeming work as the heart of essential Christianity)."

[37] Dalmeny remarked, "If there was so strong a feeling in Scotland in favour of the extension of the Established Church, why did not its friends keep up their own endowments?" Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 27, col. 542, April 1, 1835.

[38] The Maynooth Seminary in County Kildare, Ireland was established in 1795 to train Roman Catholic priests. It had been supported by Parliament through annual grants. In 1844, it was proposed to increase this grant and make it permanent. In 1845, Gladstone, still wrangling over in his mind, the proper relationship between Church and State, felt obliged to resign his Cabinet post in opposition to the proposed grant. A few months later, he supported the measure to the surprise and consternation of his former colleagues.

[39] In 1843, approximately 50% of the lay membership and 40% of the ministers (474 out of 1195) left the Church of Scotland, the Auld Kirk, to form the Free Church of Scotland. Stewart J. Brown, "The Ten Years' Conflict" in Stewart J. Brown and Michael Fry (eds.), Scotland in the Age of the Disruption (Edinburgh, 1993), p. 21.

[40] In Scotland, Voluntaries (i.e. members of the United Presbyterian Church) opposed established state religion and the teaching of denominational religion in schools.

[41] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 79, col. 1384, April 28, 1845.

diagnosis which partially prefigured Gladstone's later Irish policy,

> What Ireland requires is a Minister who should have genius to conceive and boldness to propose some grand scheme for her pacification - who unscarred by the clamour of partisans - or the rage of fanatics, should unfold his plan at once in one comprehensive whole, and who should announce his resolution to stand or fall by its success.[42]

In the final division on Maynooth, the 'ayes' list included Dalmeny, Gladstone, Peel, Macaulay[43] and Mahon.[44] In 1847, Dalmeny withdrew as the Whig candidate for the Stirling Burghs because he "rendered himself very unacceptable by the course which he has taken on ecclesiastical questions."[45]

Dalmeny's health was precarious. On January 22, 1851, after recovering from pleurisy, he died from a heart attack, leaving a widow with four young children, **Mary Catherine,[46] Constance Evelyn,[47] Archibald**

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[42] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 79, col. 1388, April 28, 1845.

[43] Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800 - 1859) was the son of Zachary Macaulay, a fervent opponent of slavery. From 1825 to 1844, he wrote extensively for the Edinburgh Review. He was a Whig MP for Calne (1830 - 32), Leeds (1832 - 34), and Edinburgh (1839 - 47 and 1852 - 56). He was Commissioner and Secretary, Board of Control (1832 - 34) and member of the Supreme Council of India (1834 - 37). He served in the Cabinet as Secretary for War (1839 - 41) and Paymaster General (1846 - 48). He was created Baron Macaulay of Rothley in 1857. His writings included poetry, Lays of Ancient Rome (1842), Critical and Historical Essays (1843), The History of England from the Accession of James II (1848 - 58), and brief biographical studies of Francis Atterbury, John Bunyan, Oliver Goldsmith, Samuel Johnson and the younger Pitt for the Encyclopaedia Britannica (1853 - 56).

[44] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 80, cols. 745 - 6, May 21, 1845.

[45] I. G. C. Hutchison, A Political History of Scotland, 1832 - 1924: Parties, Elections and Issues (Edinburgh, 1986), pp. 59 - 65. Hereafter referred to as Hutchison, A Political History of Scotland.

[46] Lady Mary Catherine Primrose (1844 - 1935) married Henry Walter Hope of Luffness (1839 - 1913) in 1885. Rosebery was closer to Constance and rarely mentions Mary.

[47] Lady Constance Evelyn Primrose (1846 - 1939) married Henry Wyndham, 2nd Lord Leconfield (1830 - 1901) in 1867 and lived at Petworth House, Sussex. As of 1880, Leconfield owned 109,935 acres in England and Ireland with an annual income in excess of £88,000 (or £4,400,000 today). Constance and Rosebery corresponded consistently over nearly six decades. She assisted him in raising his children after Hannah's death and attended to him after his own health broke down in 1918.

Philip and **Everard Henry.**[48] His premature death had far-reaching repercussions as the earldom would pass from grandfather to grandson.

Rosebery soon had a step-father.[49] On August 2, 1854, Lady Wilhelmina married **Lord Harry Vane (1803 - 1891), afterwards the 4th [and last] Duke of Cleveland.**[50] Lord Harry was the third son of William Henry Vane (1766 - 1842), the notorious 1st Duke of Cleveland.[51] The Cleveland connection was politically advantageous for Rosebery. The Vanes in their newly-purchased home, Battle Abbey, hosted prominent politicians from all parties. Rosebery's mother and step-father moved in the loftiest aristocratic circles. Through these connections, from his early youth, Rosebery met and befriended the most important political figures of the era.

Childhood

On May 7, 1847, Archibald Philip Primrose, the third child and first son of Archibald, Lord Dalmeny, and Wilhelmina (nee Stanhope), Lady Dalmeny,

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[48] Colonel Everard Henry Primrose (1848 - 1885) was educated at Eton and Cambridge. In December 1867, he delivered 'A Lecture on the History and Present State of Art Education in England,' at Cambridge which was later published. While serving with the Guards in Egypt, he died of dysentery at Abu Fatmeh on April 9, 1885.

[49] While conceding that the sources were silent, Rhodes James [p. 12] noted that after his father's death and mother's remarriage, Rosebery's "reserve was perceptibly increased." This observation is questionable. Psychobiographical interpretations must be tempered lest plausible hypotheses give way to wild conjecture.

[50] On that day, at age 7, Rosebery "followed them in a kilt of Stewart Tartan to Chevening Church to be married." Gladstone MSS, Add MS 44289, f. 144, Rosebery to Gladstone dated August 7, 1891. The Gladstone MSS and Rosebery MSS will hereafter be referred to as GP and RP respectively.

[51] The 1st Duke was a great hunter and an even greater drinker; his glasses had no base and had to be drunk immediately [E. S. Turner, Amazing Grace: The Great Days of Dukes (London, 1975), p. 253]. The Complete Peerage [vol. iii, p. 284] remarked "It is a cause of wonder that the head of the historic house of Vane of Raby ... should have so prided himself on a Bastard descent from an infamous adulteress [Barbara Villiers (1641 - 1709)], the mistress of Charles II who was created the Duchess of Cleveland in 1670]." The peerage was "the actual wages of her prostitution, and one which had stunk in the nostrils of the nation during the 40 years she enjoyed it."

was born at Lord Stanhope's house at 20 Charles Street, London. By stark contrast, the leader of The Times on that day reminded its readers that,

> Hundreds and thousands of human beings annually are born into the richest of earthly capitals to thieve, starve or rot; and for a government to interfere for the amelioration of their physical or moral state would be declared an invasion of popular privileges, vested rights and private property.[52]

On June 17, 1847, Rosebery was baptised into the Church of England at St George's, Mayfair.[53] His godparents were his grandfathers the 4th Earl of Rosebery and 4th Earl Stanhope, his uncle, the historian Lord Mahon and his great aunt, the Countess of Effingham.[54]

Little is known about Rosebery's childhood. His mother recorded her observations about the young boy in April 1850,

> Tho' high-spirited and courageous, he is so sensitive that a harsh word throws him into a flood of tears: nor is he, like his sisters, one instant crying, the next laughing - he is some time recovering from a burst of sorrow ... Everard is very different ... He is much cleverer we think.[55]

While Rosebery here is only three years old, these observations do seem to prefigure many scenes in his later years. Also, there is a hint that his mother favoured Everard, her younger son.[56]

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[52] The Times, May 7, 1847, p. 5.

[53] Rhodes James, p. 9.

[54] Lady Charlotte Primrose (1776 - 1864) was the daughter of Neil, the 3rd Earl of Rosebery. In 1800, she married Col. Kenneth Howard, later the 5th Earl of Effingham (1767 - 1845). Curiously, in 1858 (at age 82), she married Thomas Holmes, a scripture reader aged 30.

[55] Rhodes James, p. 10.

[56] Rosebery clearly favoured his younger son Neil. See Kenneth Young, Harry, Lord Rosebery (London, 1974).

In spring 1855, Rosebery commenced his formal education at Bayford, a preparatory school near Hertford. In 1859, he continued his education at Brighton, and later enrolled at Eton College in 1860.[57] Though he lauded Scottish education, his own education was exclusively English. This raises an important point: during his childhood, Rosebery lived almost exclusively with the Stanhopes and Clevelands and apart from his grandfather and the family seat at Dalmeny, he had few Scottish connections. He was born in England, his mother was English, his stepfather was English, and he worshipped in the Church of England. He could have forsaken Scotland, but instead he grew to love Scotland - it was a passion which endured. Rosebery could echo Byron's couplet,

> I am half a Scot by birth, and bred
> a whole one, and my heart flies to my head,-[58]

Intellectual Inspirations

At age eleven, Rosebery had two serious accidents. Playing blind man's bluff, he ran into a metal gate and suffered a severe concussion that necessitated several weeks in a dark room and concluded his studies at Bayford. According to his sister, he "remained ill for a long time, with fits of deep depression, hating all exercise and conversation, only asking to be left alone."[59] The second trauma occurred at Christmas 1858 and initiated a life-long relationship. At this young age, Rosebery became enchanted by the great historian, Thomas Babington Macaulay. In a letter to Macaulay's nephew, George Otto Trevelyan(**), Rosebery expressed his,

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[57] Crewe, vol. i, p. 13.

[58] Byron, "Don Juan," Canto X [1823], stanza 17, in Jerome J. McGann (ed.), Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works (7 vols., Oxford, 1980 - 93), vol. v, p. 442.

[59] Quoted in Crewe, vol. i, p. 13.

> overwhelming debt to Macaulay, for in truth I owe him everything. He first touched my trembling ears. On such an occasion it may not bore you to know how this came about. At Christmas 1858, when I was eleven, we were all playing snapdragon at Chevening. The flames burst out of the dish and I, among others, was cruelly burnt. That night I was introduced to Walter Scott by my mother's reading to me the Legend of Montrose. A day or two afterwards, I was wandering about the delightful Chevening library (which you know well), and quite by chance took down Macaulay's Essays. I fell at once under the wand of the enchanter. I began with Milton, and read no other book until I had finished the three volumes. And at the New Year my mother, seeing my absorption, gave me a copy.[60]
> There was much, of course, that I could not really understand. But I delighted in the eloquence, the grasp and the command of knowledge, the irresistible current of the style. And to that book I owe whatever ambitions or aspirations I have ever indulged in. No man can intellectually owe another more.[61]

Rosebery became acquainted with two authors who exerted lasting influence over him: Scott, the great Romantic poet and father of the historical novel, and Macaulay, the Whig historian whose style continues to captivate and inspire. Both men were not ashamed to allow their partisanship to affect their writings, and Rosebery followed their example.

Macaulay's Essays captivated Rosebery, and shortly after reading them, his mother gave him Macaulay's History of England, which Rosebery finished in March, 1859 - at age 11![62] He later recorded his admiration,

> Macaulay Two remarks that strike me with regard to him.
> 1. That with him, intuition plays a great part. He has the intuitive eye which pierces through the crust of documents and sees the truth. Take

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[60] This tender reminiscence of his mother's affection throws into doubt Rhodes James' assertions of her coldness.

[61] Rosebery to Trevelyan dated January 13, 1911 in Crewe, vol. i, p. 14. This letter is not part of the Trevelyan MSS, at the University of Newcastle.

[62] Rhodes James, p. 17.

> for example his masterpieces - the three sketches of the two Pitts.[63] Much has been written and discovered on these periods since these essays were written, but I doubt if anything could be added to or subtracted from them. This is surely intuition.
> 2. His philippics are literary exercises not vials of wrath. When he trounces Barere, Croker, or Robert Montgomery he does it (save perhaps in the case of Croker) to show that he can produce when he chooses a masterly invective, just as he tries his hand at a political ballad.[64]

These traits appeared in his protégé. Rosebery shared a keen sense of intuition; his diagnosis of the nation's ills proved accurate, and his own biographical studies though brief are perceptive and lucid. Similarly, Rosebery was rarely polemical, but he did on occasion employ a staggering arsenal of invective to trounce any opponent.

Macaulay has long been viewed as the apostle of the antiquated Whig view of history. Hamburger challenges this orthodox view arguing that Macaulay was a,

> classical 'trimmer'[65] whose highest priority was not the achievement of progress but the reduction of the great danger of civil war that arose from extremist politics, and for whom reform was only a means to the more important goal of achieving balance and stability.[66]

Rosebery was both a Whig and a trimmer, who sought to achieve equilibrium. The two extremes of the political pendulum were equally

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[63] Macaulay contributed two essays on the Elder Pitt to the Edinburgh Review, "William Pitt, Earl of Chatham" (January, 1834) and "The Earl of Chatham" (October, 1844). He also wrote the biographical entry for the younger Pitt for the Encyclopaedia Britannica (1856).

[64] Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 9, p. 8, n.d.

[65] According to the Oxford English Dictionary, vol. xviii, a trimmer was "one who trims between opposing parties in politics." The term was first applied to Halifax and his supporters during the period 1680 - 90. Halifax accepted the label in the sense of "one who keeps even the ship of state."

[66] Joseph Hamburger, Macaulay and the Whig Tradition (Chicago, 1976), p. x.

dangerous. Macaulay's observations on Halifax[67] - a hero of his History and the prototypical trimmer - have been applied to Rosebery,

> Rank and Power had strong attractions for him. He pretended, indeed, that he considered titles and great offices as baits which could allure none but fools, that he hated business, pomp and pageantry, ... but his conduct was not a little at variance with his profession. In truth he wanted to command the respect at once of courtiers and philosophers, to be admired for attaining high dignities, and to be at the same time admired for despising them.[68]

Halifax was a trimmer in favour of the losing side - when one side was losing, he shifted allegiances. Halifax (and Rosebery) "could not long be constant to any band of political allies."[69] Rosebery was neither a Radical nor a Reactionary; he was a centrist, more devoted to peace, stability and efficiency than to a political creed or party. This label, like all labels, is an oversimplification, but it is illuminating.

Hamburger noted, "Macaulay played the role of a philosophical historian whose duty it was to recognize great historical acts of civil prudence and so identify models for statesmen in his own time and in the future."[70] Rosebery too saw the beacons and signposts in history which if properly read could ensure prosperity and forestall disaster. In 1880, he encapsulated this

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[67] George Saville (1633 - 95), Viscount Halifax (cr. 1668), Earl of Halifax (cr. 1679), Marquess of Halifax (cr. 1682), served as Lord Privy Seal (1682 - 84 and 1688 - 89), Lord President of the Council (1685) and Speaker of the House of Lords (1689). "According to Bishop Burnet, Halifax 'changed sides so often that in the conclusion no side would trust him.' Hence he was nicknamed 'the Trimmer' and hence he obtained a splendid eulogy from Lord Macaulay as a defender of 'the ancient and legal constitution of the realm against a seditious populace at one conjuncture and against a tyrannical government at another.' 'As well might the Pole Star be called inconstant because it is sometimes to the east and sometimes to the west of the pointers.'" The Complete Peerage [By G.E.C.], vol. vi, p. 243 n.

[68] Quoted in Raymond, p. 36.

[69] Hamburger, Macaulay and the Whig Tradition, p. 90.

[70] Hamburger, Macaulay and the Whig Tradition, p. 165.

Whiggish view, "What we want is the bold colouring of character and the grand march of events ... events to guide us and characters to warn us."[71] While Rosebery owed a debt to Macaulay both intellectually and politically, some qualifications must be made unless this influence, or any other influence, is unduly stressed. Rosebery lived in a different and distinct age. He had different experiences and he faced new challenges. Studying those individuals who influenced Rosebery is a valuable endeavour, but it does not answer every question.

Reading gave Rosebery an opportunity to forget the present and return to the past where good was far easier to discern. His favourite companions included Macaulay and Scott. Rosebery was impressed by Scott's Scottish novels, but his favourite work was Scott's journal. As John Buchan(**) noted, Rosebery,

> lived much in the far past, and it was rather on memories of the Scotland, Eton, and Oxford of his youth that he dwelt, than on the brilliant arena of his middle years. He used often to tell me that after the New Testament, he found Sir Walter Scott's Journal to be the most comforting book in the world.[72]

From his youth, Rosebery enjoyed the Arabian Nights (i.e. The Thousand and One Nights), Gray's Poems, Aytoun's Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers, and Thiers'[73] History of the Consulate and the Empire.[74] This was not the typical

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[71] Rosebery, "Aberdeen Rectorial Address," November 5, 1880, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 48.

[72] John Buchan, "Lord Rosebery, 1847 - 1930[sic]," reprint from Proceedings of the British Academy, vol. xvi (London, 1930), p. 18. Rosebery had read the journal "during Hannah's illness & therefore tested it severely, and I laid it down feeling it to be not merely helpful but sublime." Hamilton MSS, 48612A, f. 128, Rosebery to Hamilton dated February 16, 1891.

[73] Louis Adolphe Thiers (1797 - 1877) was a politician and a writer. He encouraged French national sentiment when he secured the return of Napoleon's body in 1840. Later, he became the 1st President of the 3rd Republic (1871 - 73) promoting himself as a wise old patriot. His two great historical works were the 10-volume Histoire de la Révolution Française (1823 - 27) and the 21-volume Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire (1845 - 69) - on

reading material for a young boy, but Rosebery was not a typical young boy. He saturated his mind in the romantic and the exotic. His mind was filled with the tales of the great men of history and the great tragedies of history. His own writing and speaking style were heavily influenced by these intellectual forces. His love of Scotland and his devotion to the Empire were inculcated and strengthened through his reading.

Yet Rosebery was not introverted: he soon attracted the attention of his elders. On September 5, 1861, at the age of 14, Rosebery spoke for the first time in public. At a dinner for the Linlithgow Volunteers hosted by his grandfather, the 4th earl, Lord Dalmeny prosed a toast which was so notable that one of the guests, Mr Dundas of Dundas, the Vice-Lieutenant of Linlithgow remarked "in that young man they had seen and heard, one of Great Britain's future prime ministers."[75] Yet, great minds rarely develop in isolation. Rosebery needed competition and criticism to refine his raw potential into a more resilient alloy.

Eton and Oxford

Ah happy hills, ah pleasing shade,
Ah fields belov'd in vain,
Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales, that from ye blow,
A momentary bliss bestow,
As waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And, redolent of joy and youth,

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which Crewe commented [vol. i, p. 14], "this book surely, also nourished, if not ambitions and aspirations, at least admirations and sympathies destined to colour the web of the [Rosebery's] approaching manhood."

[74] Crewe, vol. i, pp. 13 - 14.

[75] Edward Rodgers and Edmund J. Moyle, Man of the Moment: No. 2 The Rt. Hon. Lord Rosebery (London, 1902), p. 5. The Scotsman [September 7, 1861, p. 7] noted that Dalmeny was present at this occasion but it did not record his speech.

To breathe a second spring.
Gray, "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College"[76]

In Autumn 1860, Rosebery commenced his Eton career. The curriculum was largely classical, though he read modern literature and history extensively. Rosebery's tutor was the brilliant, but eccentric, William Johnson[77] who was greatly impressed by the young nobleman and undoubtedly influenced Rosebery's intellectual and political development. At a predominantly Tory institution, Johnson was Liberal with strong Imperial sympathies.[78] His favourites (including Rosebery) developed a strong attachment to him. Oscar Browning, a pupil of Johnson, admitted, "I owe everything to him, and there are many living far more distinguished and successful than myself who would say the same."[79]

Johnson adored Rosebery, hailed him as a genius and coined his Etonian nickname 'Joab.'[80] Writing to a fellow tutor, Johnson remarked, "Dalmeny is a strong and wise admirer of both Napoleons. Altogether he

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[76] H. W. Starr and J. R. Hendrickson (eds.), The Complete Poems of Thomas Gray (Oxford, 1966), p. 7.

[77] William Johnson (1823 - 1892) was appointed assistant master at Eton in 1845 where he tutored until 1872. The explanation for his departure is still not fully known. After 1872 [Tim Card, Eton Renewed: A History from 1860 to the Present (London, 1994), p. 66], Johnson "became a non-person at Eton, his name [was] removed from his textbooks." After leaving Eton, he changed his name to Cory, married and lived overseas. He was a noted poet and his most famous work was "Ionica" (1858).

[78] Card, Eton Renewed, p. 30.

[79] Oscar Browning, Memories of Sixty Years at Eton, Cambridge and Elsewhere (London, 1910), pp. 20, 64.

[80] "Lord Rosebery as a boy was difficult of access even to his tutor. So much so that the unusual method had on one occasion to be adopted of tearing over his verses in order to secure his presence in 'pupil room.' It had the desired effect, and to his enquiry of why that indignity had been put upon him, he was told the story of how Absalom burnt Joab's corn when he found that an interview could not be obtained by less dramatic means. This episode earned Lord Rosebery's nickname." Reginald Brett, Cloud Capp'd Towers (London, 1927), p. 21. The scriptural reference is to 2 Samuel, chapter 14, verses 28 - 33, but Joab's field was in fact planted with barley not corn.

must be the wisest boy that ever lived and full of fun, too."[81] Such adoration was neither healthy nor natural. Despite his fulsome praise, Johnson was disappointed with Rosebery's academic performance. He lamented "I have to report the general failure of our attempts to get more work out of him. In all my experience it is the saddest case of the waste of faculties."[82] Eton could have moulded the precocious boy into a disciplined young man. This did not happen. Johnson's reports to Rosebery's mother combined criticism and praise. In 1862, he wrote,

> Most boys that get credit for good taste are merely reflecting and reproducing what they get from their seniors; but Archie ... is original all day long; too original to be very popular. He has more affectation than tact, and quite as much antipathy as sympathy; so that he is not floating with the stream of popularity. All would come right if he were more seriously engaged in a course of study, overcoming difficulties and competing with the many worthy rivals whom a great school contains.[83]

In 1897, these personal observations were published in Johnson's Letters and Journals. This publication confirmed Rosebery's strong feelings against the posthumous publication of memoirs. An 1862 letter from Johnson contained observations which hounded Rosebery throughout his career and has been included in every subsequent biography. Johnson wrote, "I would give you a piece of plate if you would get that lad to work; he is one of those who like the palm without the dust."[84] This aphorism illuminates Rosebery's character, but it is not the final word on his life. Rosebery did secure the palm but he also received his due portion of dust.

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[81] Francis Warre Cornish (ed.), Extracts from the Letters and Journals of William Cory (Oxford, 1897), p. 122, Johnson to C. W. Furse dated April 14, 1865.

[82] Rhodes James, p. 27.

[83] Rhodes James, p. 30.

[84] Letters and Journals of Cory, p. 79, Johnson to Cornish dated November 17, 1862.

In October 1864, he was elected to the Eton Society ('Pop') - the debating club - by a margin of 19 to 4.[85] A contemporary Etonian noted,

> It is a great honour to be elected into the Eton Society, and it is one of the happiest moments of a boy's school life when he hears of his election. Members are looked up to with awe by lower boys, and command considerable respect.[86]

Rosebery delivered his maiden speech in 1864 on, "Is the character of Dundee to be admired?" In a speech with echoes of Scott, Aytoun and Macaulay, Rosebery asserted, "I think Dundee was a very brave man. His life and death were equally romantic. I therefore give my vote in favour of Dundee,"[87] and he cast the deciding vote in the 11 - 10 division. Rosebery, a Scot, defended a Scot to a mainly English audience. Like Macaulay, Rosebery's historical objectivity was overridden by emotion. Rosebery defended Dundee, an enemy of progress, because his life and death were steeped in stirring romantic folklore. In another debate, Rosebery demonstrated that he could use invective when required,

> About Lord Bolingbroke's political character I can only say that it is one of the lowest imaginable. He was always ready to betray his country for the sake of his own interest or the gold of France. The crowning glory of his administration was the Peace of Utrecht which was a piece of consummate treachery.[88]

In this brief segment, Rosebery the Whig politician opposes the Tory Treaty

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[85] In 1894, Rosebery reminisced to Gladstone, "We had our weekly debates - not very good I think because we were a poor generation. We might have put on the chimney piece a photograph of the Derby winner, or any other chance photograph referring to current events, ... We cherished our records of the past, and maintained the reports of the weekly debates." GP, Add MS 44290, f. 239, Rosebery to Gladstone dated July 8, 1894.

[86] Eton by an Old Etonian (London, 1910), p. 49.

[87] Eton Society MSS, 1864 volume, p. 268, November 7, 1864.

[88] Eton Society MSS, 1865 volume, p. 112, March 13, 1865.

of Utrecht and Rosebery the Whig historian presents history as a clash between the allies and enemies of progress.

On March 6, 1865, in response to the question, "Ought England to part with Canada?," Rosebery,

> arguing somewhat against his private conviction that we ought to keep and defend Canada. ... [urged] that the country which was gained for us by the sagacity of a Chatham & which cost us the blood of a Wolfe, ought not to be lightly abandoned.[89]

Though shallow in its content, this was Rosebery's first recorded utterance upon the Empire and demonstrated several valuable skills for a politician. He defended a position that he did not fully support, and defended it eloquently and compellingly. These extracts further underline Rosebery's flair for the romantic. He studied great men, figures larger than life, who were cut down in their prime (Pitt and Peel) or faded away after a pathetic period of declension (Napoleon and Lord Randolph Churchill).

Rosebery made friends easily, but Johnson observed that he had a habit of "choosing companions almost fastidiously, but showing unusually strong regard for the few with whom he associates."[90] He made an impression on the other boys, as one contemporary recorded, "nothing ever seemed to ruffle or put him out, and he treated everybody and everything with the utmost complacency: he never appeared to work, yet he knew everything."[91] No one doubted his intellect or potential, and he made himself appear to be above mundane concerns.

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[89] Eton Society MSS, 1865 volume, p. 91, March 6, 1865.

[90] Rhodes James, p. 24.

[91] Alfred Lubbock, Memories of Eton and Etonians (London, 1899), p. 175.

Throughout his life, Rosebery cultivated a diverse and valuable network of friends. His Eton contemporaries included Arthur James Balfour(**), Lord Randolph Churchill, Lord Lansdowne(**), Reginald Brett(**), and Edward Hamilton. Most of his noble contemporaries were Conservative. His friendships with Churchill, Brett and especially Hamilton were strong and enduring. Brett and Hamilton were not great politicians, but they were extremely well connected in the upper echelons of politics and society where information and connections are vital.

These years instilled a strong affection for Eton that persisted throughout his life. In 1898, he reminisced to old Etonians,

> there is one consolation in getting older as an Etonian - that you keep the pride that has always been in you since you went to Eton, the pride of the prowess of your school. I never knew but one Etonian who said he did not like Eton, and very soon he went to the devil.[92]

On August 4, 1865, after attending his last Chapel, he noted, "God grant I may never have such a wrench again. I cannot take in that I am no longer an Etonian."[93] Nostalgic to the end, in 1929, on his deathbed, Rosebery requested his servant to play the Eton Boating Song on a phonograph.[94]

From Eton, Rosebery entered Christ Church, Oxford, on January 16, 1866. This transition is not as natural as it appears. Rosebery's grandfather, father, uncle and younger brother all attended Cambridge. Rosebery's rationale is uncertain apart from one clue which he uttered nearly forty years after he entered Oxford. Eulogising Gladstone, Rosebery remarked,

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[92] Rosebery, "Speech at Eton," October 28, 1898, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, pp. 283 - 4. This last reference, taken by the audience to refer to Lord Salisbury, resulted in a roar of laughter. Rosebery later disclaimed this interpretation.

[93] Rosebery's diary entry for August 4, 1865 quoted in Rhodes James, p. 40.

[94] Winston S. Churchill, Great Contemporaries (London, 1937), p. 16. The Eton boating song was composed by William Johnson in 1865 - Rosebery's last complete year at Eton.

> And even by the heedless generation of boyhood, [Gladstone's moral courage] was appreciated for we find an Etonian writing to his parents to ask that he might go to Oxford rather than Cambridge, on the sole ground that at Oxford he would have the priceless advantage of Gladstone's influence and example.[95]

Long before they met, Gladstone exerted a strong influence over Rosebery - an influence which persisted after Gladstone's death. Christ Church, famous as the 'birthplace' of many Prime Ministers,must have been doubly attractive to the young Rosebery. His close friends at 'The House' (Christ Church) were Lord Bute(**), Lord Ilchester,[96] Edward Marjoribanks(**), George Murray(**) and Edward Hamilton. He was also close friends with Lansdowne at Balliol and Churchill at Merton. Rosebery later admitted that "the Christ Church set ... saw regrettably little of the rest of the University."[97] He did not participate in the Oxford Union which was surprising given his success in 'Pop' at Eton.

While pursing his degree in Oxford, Rosebery's idyllic life was shattered by the news of his grandfather's grave illness. He rushed to the bedside of the fourth earl and was present when he died on March 4, 1868. Thenceforward, the House of Commons was forever closed to him. The House of Lords later styled, "a crematorium in which all living things end up in smoke,"[98] was inhospitable to a young Liberal peer. Rosebery humorously reflected on his disability,

> I have always thought, since I took any interest in public affairs, that a man who had been in the House of Commons and had then entered the House of Lords and continued his interest in public affairs was like a man with a wooden leg trying to walk with other men. And I have

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[95] Rosebery, Gladstone: A Speech Delivered at the Unveiling of the Statue at Glasgow, October 11, 1902 (London, 1902). The letter to which Rosebery refers does not survive but the reference is most assuredly to himself.

[96] Henry Edward Fox-Strangways (1847 - 1905), the 5th Earl of Ilchester.

[97] Rosebery, Lord Randolph Churchill, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, p. 292.

[98] James Renwick, Life and Work of Lord Rosebery (London, 1909), p. 23.

> still more strongly felt that the man in the House of Lords who took an interest in public affairs and had never been in the House of Commons was like a man with two wooden legs.[99]

After acceding to the earldom, Rosebery visited his Scottish estates for the first time in six years. He owned 15,568 acres in Midlothian, 5,680 in Linlithgow and 2,000 acres in Norfolk, with an estimated annual income of £30,000[100] (or approximately £1,500,000 today).[101] Unlike his friends Lansdowne and Hartington(**), he was not burdened with encumbered Irish estates, nor did he possess Crofter estates in the Scottish Highlands. Rosebery was very rich in an age of conspicuous consumption.

Rhodes James suggested that this life of privilege and wealth insulated Rosebery from struggling as a young man.[102] However, most politicians were insulated from struggling. Wealth was a prerequisite for politics, both for MPs who were not paid and for peers who were expected to support their party and its candidates. Rosebery employed his money to further his career and advance his party. He gave generously to Liberal organisations, to individual candidates, and to charitable causes.

Returning to Oxford, Rosebery's tutor, Mr Owen, expected him to earn "a brilliant First Class in the Honours School of Modern History"[103] but these expectations were left unfulfilled.[104] A new passion had captured Rosebery's attention: the turf. In 1869, he purchased a race horse, and boldly predicted

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[99] Rosebery, "Banquet Given in Honour of Lord Rosebery by the Scottish Liberal Association," November 13, 1885, in The Scotsman, November 14, p. 10.

[100] Rhodes James, p. 47.

[101] Roy Jenkins, a former Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Gladstone (London, 1995) uses a conversion factor of 50 to 1 [e.g. p. 625] to represent Victorian figures in today's money. This approximation will be used throughout this thesis.

[102] Rhodes James, p. 48.

[103] Crewe, vol. i, p. 40.

[104] By contrast, Gladstone earned a double first in Mathematics and Classics.

a Derby victory. The Dean of Christ Church, Henry Liddell,[105] did not share his enthusiasm, and told Rosebery to choose between the horse and a University education.[106] Owning a race horse was against University regulations. At Easter, 1869, Rosebery's "name was removed from the books, and he ceased to be a member of the University, with no B.A. to his credit."[107] He chose the turf over Christ Church. His horse, Ladas,[108] named after one of Alexander the Great's swift messengers, did not live up to his august name and finished the Derby only after the entire field had passed the post.

Disraeli and Gladstone

During these early years, Rosebery's interest in politics grew. In August 1865, he met Disraeli at Raby Castle (the home of his parents the Duke and Duchess of Cleveland). Disraeli's genius, flamboyance, and daring appealed to the young man. Rosebery later remarked, "in an imagination of Oriental glow, [Disraeli] blended his Radical recollections with the professions required of a Tory, and so produced 'Young England.'"[109] Rosebery told his sons that his interest in politics dated from this meeting with Disraeli in 1865.[110] Disraeli encouraged Rosebery to send any pertinent observations about the political scene. The effect of this confidence can only be estimated

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[105] Liddell's daughter, Alice, was the inspiration for Lewis Carroll's [Rev. Charles L. Dodgson] Alice in Wonderland.

[106] Rosebery reminisced to Brett on June 6, 1894 (the day Rosebery won his first Derby) that "twenty five years previously, the Dean of Christ Church bid him to chose between Christ Church and the horse." Reginald Brett [Viscount Esher], Extracts from Journals 1880 - 95 (Privately Printed, Cambridge, 1914), p. 309.

[107] Crewe, vol. i, p. 44. According to Christ Church officials today, no additional records of this incident exist.

[108] Ladas became Rosebery's nickname to his Oxford friends, just as he was known as Joab, Dalmeny or simply 'D' to his Eton contemporaries.

[109] Rosebery, Lord Randolph Churchill, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, pp. 339 - 40.

[110] Robert Blake, Disraeli (London, 1966), p. 412.

but, for a youth of eighteen, to be on cordial terms with the exotic leader of the Conservative Party was remarkable. Rosebery would have been a great prize for the Conservative party, but Disraeli realised that Rosebery was lost to the Liberals.[111]

Of all his alliances, Rosebery's friendship with Gladstone was the most significant, and yet it was difficult to understand. Rosebery first 'met' Gladstone in 1858 when he read Macaulay's stinging essay, "Gladstone on Church and State,"[112] in which Macaulay noted, "It would not be at all strange if Mr Gladstone were one of the most unpopular men in England."[113] Macaulay reserved the bulk of his essay for unravelling and refuting Gladstone's logic and argumentation,

> Whatever Mr Gladstone sees is refracted and distorted by a false medium of passions and prejudices. His style bears a remarkable analogy to his mode of thinking, and indeed exercises great influence on his mode of thinking. His rhetoric, though often good of its kind, darkens and perplexes the logic which it should illustrate.[114]

Gladstone had greatly changed since Macaulay wrote his essay. No longer a young arch-Tory, Gladstone was the architect of the Liberal Party.

In 1864, Rosebery witnessed Gladstone introduce his budget in the House of Commons.[115] In October 1868, Mrs Gladstone invited the newly

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[111] See conversation between Rosebery and Mrs Disraeli recorded in Rhodes James, p. 44.

[112] Macaulay's review of Gladstone's The State in its Relation with the Church (2nd ed., London, 1839) appeared in the April 1839 issue of the Edinburgh Review.

[113] Macaulay, "Gladstone on Church and State," in F. C Montague (ed.), Critical and Historical Essays, Contributed to the Edinburgh Review by Lord Macaulay (3 vols., London, 1903), vol. ii, p. 331.

[114] Macaulay, "Gladstone on Church and State," in Montague (ed.), Essays by Lord Macaulay, vol. ii, p. 333.

[115] For Gladstone's budget speech see Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 174, cols. 536 - 600, April 17, 1864.

elevated Peer to a dance at Hawarden, where he met the extended Gladstone family.[116] No records of this first encounter exist, but the contrast between the two men is striking. Rosebery was a young carefree aristocrat, a devotee of the turf, who moved in the highest levels of society. Thirty-eight years his senior, Gladstone was high-toned and serious. Gladstone

> proceeded on the principle that reasons of state justify nothing that is not justified already by the human conscience. The statesman is for him a man charged with maintaining not only the material interests but the honour of his country.[117]

Despite these differences, they formed a close personal and political bond. The Bishop of Chester's reminiscence reveals Rosebery's affection,

> I shared in the last watch beside Mr Gladstone's body in Westminster Hall. The watch was from 12 to 2 AM on the morning of the funeral; and just before 2 o'clock, someone stepped quickly and quietly up to the hall and knelt for some minutes in prayer at the foot of the coffin. When he rose from his knees, I recognized Lord Rosebery. It was deeply moving to witness this last tribute to his old chief.[118]

The symbolism is intriguing. On that quiet spring morning, Rosebery seemed poised to take up his inheritance from Gladstone, as Elisha had inherited Elijah's mantle.[119] In reality, Rosebery was mourning his beloved chief and the effective death of his own political career.

Gladstone was also aware of the young nobleman, and he soon recognised Rosebery's potential. In 1872, Rosebery received an indication of

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[116] Crewe, vol. i, p. 47.

[117] L. T. Hobhouse, Liberalism (London, 1911), p. 104.

[118] RP, MS 10203, f. 42, Bishop of Chester [Rt. Rev. Henry Luke Paget (1853 - 1937)] to Lord Crewe [copy] dated July 1929.

[119] 2 Kings, chapter 2, verses 1 - 15.

Gladstone's feelings in a letter from Frederick Lawley of The Daily Telegraph to Ouseley Higgins, a common friend,

> I have had a long talk with Gladstone this morn[in]g who spoke most warmly & kindly of Rosebery - of his speech of last night[120] - of his character and ability: - adding "I have often seriously thought of proposing that noblemen should be permitted even when in full possession of their title to sit in the H of C until they had reached their twenty fifth year - & I only wish I had Rosebery there now."[121]

The Rosebery - Gladstone relationship is crucial to Rosebery's biography, and will be detailed accordingly.

Religion

> The Magna Charta of Christianity is in I John iv.8. "God is Love" AR.[122]

It is appropriate and essential to discuss Rosebery's religion, a facet of his life which has been largely overlooked. His faith is far more important than his biographers suggest. It was an important pillar in his life, and gives a greater depth to a man who is too often dismissed as superficial. His speeches are infused with biblical allusions and, from his audience with Pope Pius IX in 1870, he was intrigued by religious leaders.

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[120] In the Lords, Rosebery spoke with calm wisdom in support of the Treaty of Washington which settled the arbitration between America and Great Britain over the Alabama claims. He did not avoid confronting the most powerful members of the upper chamber. Defending his intervention, he "preferred his own insignificance to the eminence - the mischievous eminence of the noble Earl [Russell]." Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 211, cols. 1165 - 66, June 4, 1872.

[121] RP, MS 10073, f. 48, Lawley to Higgins dated June 5, 1872. Frederick Lawley was a member of the turf club. In the 1870s, he was a frequent correspondent of Gladstone and Rosebery. Ouseley Higgins was a wealthy soldier who was involved in gambling and racing.

[122] Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 5, p. 84, AR is Rosebery's interconnected monogram, with which he signed his letters. It is unusual and reminiscent of the younger Pitt's signature, WP.

> Lord Rosebery, like many a Scot, was a born and discriminating 'sermon taster.' His favourite preachers were the late Dr Wallace Williamson, Dean of the Thistle, Minister of St Giles and the late Dr John Kelman.[123]

Unlike Gladstone or Morley who made their faith or absence of faith apparent, Rosebery kept his personal religion private.

Though he rarely spoke of spiritual matters in public; Rosebery wrote sermons for his friend Canon William Rogers(**). In addition to the sermon mentioned in the introduction, Rosebery composed a discourse on Philippians 3:13-14, "The one thing I do forgetting those things which are behind ..." which Rogers also delivered.[124] Rosebery delivered one 'sermon' on the text "Lift up your hearts" on August 4, 1918.[125] It was Rosebery's last public address, before he was debilitated by a stroke in November 1918.

Rosebery tried to remain aloof from the religious controversies of his day. His adherence to the Church of England, allowed him to avoid much of the rancour of the thorny Scottish Church Question. He was neither denominational nor sectarian: his tastes were truly catholic. He felt at ease

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[123] Letter to the editor from Archibald Fleming, Minister of St Columba's, Church of Scotland, London in The Times, June 3, 1929, p. 17. Rev. Dr John Kelman (1864 - 1929) was a United Free Presbyterian Minister in Edinburgh.

[124] Attributed to Rosebery in J. B. Capper's letter to the Editor in The Times, May 31, 1929, p. 13. An extract from the sermon was printed in The Times [March 3, 1892, p. 7], "Christianity was a practical religion. We were placed in this beautiful universe to lead useful lives; our duty to God involved a duty to the world and to our neighbour. We were meant to be practical as well as pious."

[125] Lady Battersea, a cousin by marriage, sent Rosebery a newspaper clipping stating that he had preached a sermon. Rosebery promptly replied [Battersea MSS, Add MS 47,909, f. 177 Rosebery to Lady Battersea dated August 20, 1918], "Who has been deceiving you? I never preached a sermon in my life & never shall." A few days later in response to a subsequent letter, Rosebery admitted that he was "bullied ... into the pulpit to make a short speech on August 4. This was wholly unrecorded & caused me great anguish. It is my last speech & in no sense a sermon." Battersea MSS, Add MS 47,909, f. 178, Rosebery to Lady Battersea dated August 24, 1918.

worshipping in the Church of England, the Church of Scotland,[126] and the Church of Rome. He read prayers to his children and a sermon from one of his favourite Christian writers such as Thomas Chalmers or John Henry [Cardinal] Newman.

From his youth, he was serious about religion and he recalled that his favourite hymn at Bayford was, "God Our Strength" Joshua X.10-14,

> The Lord descended from above
> And bowed the heaven's most high;
> And underneath his feet he cast
> The darkness of the sky
> On Cherubim and Seraphim
> Full royally he rode;
> And on the wings of mighty winds
> Came flying all abroad
> ---
> Blest be the Lord thy mighty God,
> Most worthy of all praise;
> He is my rock, my saving health;
> To him my songs I'll raise
> O God, my strength and fortitude,
> My heart shall rest in thee!
> Thou art my fortress and defence
> In all necessity.[127]

Rosebery had an appreciation of Evangelical Christianity from the hymns of Wesley to the preaching of Spurgeon, but he was not an Evangelical. Rosebery shunned all attempts to tell him what to do or to believe.

After marrying Hannah De Rothschild - who was Jewish - Rosebery's faith was a subject of conjecture and even of ridicule. In 1888, Lady Aberdeen(**), Rosebery's close friend, observed that concerning him,

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[126] In 1862, Rosebery noted, "I went to Dalmeny Church on Sunday for the first time in my life." RP, MS 10071, f. 46, n.d. [1862]. On May 25, 1929, he was interred there.

[127] Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 5, p. 43, n.d.

> "The three questions that most often occur [concerning Rosebery] are 'has he any real religious belief?,' 'Is he sincere?,' 'Has he real sympathy with the poor, with the social questions affecting the working classes or will he only take up such questions as will tend to his own advancement?'"[128]

Was he a Christian? Did he believe anything at all and if so, what? In contrast to Gladstone, whose faith was deep-rooted and confident, Rosebery was reared in the age of Darwin - an era noted for scepticism and doubt. His mind was ever active. He analysed subjects which others were content to accept. Yet, his sentiments also suggest an intellectual snobbery - an unwillingness to submit to (or reject) a higher authority. In a memorandum, "Christmas Thoughts 1905," penned just after his final break with Campbell-Bannerman, he noted the hypocrisy of modern religion when compared against the New Testament,

> Christ had no liturgies. He moved through the world, touching it at every point, rebuking, reforming, encouraging ... He went his path [sic] in the world, avoiding nothing, speaking his message, enduring his stripes, until through the doors of a police court he is led to his shameful and immortal death. Then a society appropriates him, and gradually develops the reverence for his memory into a great tradition of custom, observance and costume. The active preacher and moralist who spoke to the streets and marketplaces of his country is transformed into a priest ... monstrously moaning 'Dearly beloved brethren' all day long in half empty buildings. Is this what Christ did, or enjoined or requires?[129]

In a memorandum on faith and the nature of belief written in 1913, he contended,

> It can not be contradicted as a principle that the prime study of man should be religion, for his eternity depends on it. And his eternity is

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[128] RP, MS 10087, f. 291, Lady Aberdeen to Rosebery dated November 12, 1888.

[129] Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc. 8365, vol. 9, p. 75, memorandum dated Christmas 1905.

> not merely a doctrine of Christianity, for materialists can only say they know nothing of it one way or another ... [A materialist] believes that a God who is represented as all merciful and all just will not punish a creature of innocent life, who, unable to maintain religion against the criticisms of science, contrives steadily and honestly to seek after truth, to strive for light wherever he may find it. I am inclined to agree with this view. But what does it matter what an ignorant mortal may <u>think</u> on such a subject. He cannot <u>know</u>, and God's ways are not our ways.[130] He may take a different view, & that is the only one which matters. If eternal life, happy or unhappy may be true and may depend on our conduct during our few mortal years it is too dreadful a possibility to neglect, and our supreme study should be religion ... Is it not best then to acknowledge that Christianity is an impenetrable mystery before which we incline ourselves in admiration but which we do not profess to understand. The Trinity, the Incarnation, the Miraculous Conception, the Atonement are all mysteries beyond our ken ... We do not comprehend, we worship. Some of us worship by unaffected faith and they are happy. But faith is not at the command of many or even of most. It is not a common quality or attribute, but a high privilege, a divine endowment to be devoutly sought but rarely obtained, not even by saints.[131]

Rosebery acknowledges the central importance of religion but then admits that it is an incomprehensible mystery and that it cannot withstand the criticisms of science. Like many intellectuals, he seems convinced that the Christian faith requires an in-depth understanding of great theological questions and also suggests that the Bible cannot be fully trusted. He was a student of Liberal rather than Reformed theology. While these great theological (and philosophical) questions are important, the mark of true believers is a simple and sincere faith in Christ. Rosebery did not pen his own confession of faith. This memorandum suggests that Rosebery had complicated the basic meaning of Christianity and in so doing found himself unable to comprehend it or to submit to it. He avoids discussing his own beliefs or faith and concentrates on probing the deeper waters of theology.

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[130] Allusion to Isaiah, chapter 55, verse 8, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord" (Authorised Version).

[131] RP, MS 10177, ff. 141 - 145, memorandum entitled, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief" [Mark, chapter 9, verse 24 (Authorised Version)] commenced in Vichy, May, 1913.

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Also , this and subsequent memoranda focus on Christian doctrine while giving rather scant attention to the person of Jesus. While, this does not provide a conclusive summary of Rosebery's faith, it does suggest that he considered secondary issues instead of primary ones. Rosebery concluded the memorandum in 1914 after the First World War had exploded in Europe,

> If one is not endowed with the sublime gift of faith, if one spurns the fierce resolution to believe without faith, but if one is not, only not willing to risk the 'if', but is warmly sensible of the necessity for our own comfort & elevation & guidance, of religious devotion, if in a word one is religious without the complete conviction of faith, one becomes a 'religious agnostic' a phrase I invented for myself & mentioned to Dr Kelman, who rather to my surprise accepted it without objection.
>
> Every thoughtful and devout mind must be agnostic, though the word has an ugly sound. There is for example an immense field of tenets covered by that absurd document, absurdly called the Athanasian Creed,[132] as to which we can only surmise, possibly believe but can know nothing.
>
> Again 'I know that my Redeemer liveth'[133] is a sublime burst, but of the exact nature of that Redeemer we know nothing how far his human & how far his divine nature reconciled when they coexisted in him. No one can definitely, or indefinitely for that matter, explain this to us.
>
> Does this imply that we are infidels or little short of it? God forbid. But does it not mean that, failing the divine inspiration of faith and necessarily failing knowledge, we can strive for faith, strive for light, and strive for conviction; that we can humbly acknowledge God the father, God the redeemer and God the Holy Spirit without forcing our minds to comprehend what these imperfect instruments were never formed to comprehend; and that we can seek to obtain by prayer and the sacrament the divine companionship and blessing of Christ who was once a man like ourselves?
>
> And so we ~~stand~~ kneel in hope, humility and reverence before

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[132] The Athanasian Creed (c. 5th Century a.d.) was a formula of the early church which focused on the Trinity and the Incarnation. The creed is prefaced and concluded with the assertion that belief in the truths it asserts is necessary to salvation. Its inclusion in the Church of England's liturgy entailed much opposition and unease. It is not surprising given Rosebery's statements about these mysteries and his own nature that he would not look in favour upon a creed which demanded his full concurrence or else condemned him to perdition.

[133] Job, chapter 19, verse 25 (Authorised Version).

> the mystery which we call religion. We rejoice as much in the glorious psalms and gospels and the noble liturgy of the Anglican church, as any priest or saint. And as we grow old we are never so much at home as in Church in communion with the divine. Nov 15. 1914[134]

Clearly religion was a subject that Rosebery considered closely. This memorandum raises several questions concerning Rosebery's faith. While there is a rational basis to Christianity, at one point a 'leap of faith' is required. Rosebery examined the great mysteries of the Christian faith, but did he accept them? He certainly had more than a mere appreciation of the Christian Church, but did he have a real faith? A man's heart is an impenetrable labyrinth, but these documents do raise questions concerning a central foundation of Rosebery's life. Taken together with the events of his later years, these notes underline his inclination towards vacillation and irresolution when decision and commitment is required.

Accession 1869 - 1880

Previous biographical studies have provided only cursory analyses of Rosebery's early political career and his rise to power in Scotland. Between 1869 and 1880, Rosebery skilfully manipulated people and exploited the new machinery of politics to carve out a position of preeminence in Scotland which he used as a springboard into British and Imperial politics. As a Scottish Liberal peer, Rosebery had a defined, albeit obscure, sphere in which to mature without any significant competition. The last major British politician with an identifiable interest in Scotland was Henry Dundas.[135] In

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[134] RP, MS 10177, ff. 141 - 145, memorandum, "Lord I believe..." concluded on November 15, 1914.

[135] Henry Dundas (1742 - 1811) was a Tory MP for Midlothian (1774 - 82 and 1783 - 90), Newton, Isle of Wight (1782), and Edinburgh (1790 - 1802). For more than 30 years, he effectively ruled Scotland. He served as Solicitor General of Scotland (1766 - 75), Lord Advocate (1775 - 83) and Joint Keeper (1777 - 79) and Keeper (1779 - 1800) of the Signet. He was Rector of the University of Glasgow (1781 - 3). He served as Commissioner of the Board of Indian Affairs (1784 - 93), Treasurer of the Navy (1782 - 83 and 1783 - 1800), Home

his biography of Pitt, Rosebery noted that in Scotland, Dundas "had long reigned supreme, with general popularity and good nature, by the exercise of a double patronage. While he had Scotticised India, he had orientalised Scotland."[136] Dundas was exceptional and no one replaced him. During the first seventy years of the nineteenth century, Scotland produced ministers, viceroys and generals, but lacked a major political figure whose agenda was distinctly Scottish. This changed with the accession of Rosebery.

Political Alignment

> Men are netted early into political clubs; or fall when callow, under the influence of some statesman or stand as youths for some constituency before they have considered the problems of life. Many never consider them at all; but those who do must often find themselves in disagreement with the politics which they have prematurely professed. Some too must find that, while they remain staunch to what seem fundamental tenets, the party itself, under erratic guidance, or lured by the prospect of momentary advantage, is wandering away from its fold; and so, while they themselves remain orthodox, they are isolated by the unorthodoxy of their friends.
> Rosebery, Lord Randolph Churchill[137]

This extract gives insight both into Rosebery's early career and partially explains his later disenchantment with the Liberal Party. The Whig tradition of the Primroses made it likely and natural that Rosebery would align himself with the Liberal Party coalescing under Gladstone's leadership. However, the Conservatives made the first overture to him, undoubtedly at the prompting of Disraeli. In September 1867, Rosebery refused to stand as a Conservative

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Secretary (1791 - 94), President of the Board of Control for India (1793 - 1801), Secretary for War (1794 - 1801), and First Lord of the Admiralty (1804 - 05). He was created 1st Viscount Melville in 1802. He resigned as First Lord of the Admiralty when the House of Commons declared that he had been guilty of a "gross violation of the law, and a high breach of duty." In 1806, he was impeached in the House of Lords but acquitted.

[136] Rosebery, Pitt, p. 252.

[137] Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, p. 341.

for Darlington at the next election. On October 27, 1867, he explained to his mother, "it is not the time for a young man to commit himself in anyway on either side,"[138] which was a polite way to say that joining the party which his mother supported would blight his political prospects. If he joined the Conservatives, he would be forever in second place to the Duke of Buccleuch in lowland Scotland. Rosebery desired to be 'King of the Castle' and his first task was to become the 'King of Scotland.' The next overture came from Lord Granville(**), the Liberal leader in the House of Lords, who was always keen to enlist young peers for the Liberals. The Liberal Party was already outnumbered by almost a hundred votes in the Lords.[139] In 1869, he asked Rosebery to second the Queen's Speech. Rosebery refused citing his own inadequacy, but he clearly indicated his allegiance to the Liberal Party,

> I have never yet professed any political principles of any kind: for I think that when such profession is unnecessary, it is much wiser for a young man to reserve it. But my private sympathies and my reason have been wholly enlisted in the Liberal cause for some years: and as in June I must take one side or the other, I see no use in postponing that choice for a few months, when I have so thoroughly made up my mind, and so excellent an opportunity occurs of making that mind known to you. I can never hope to be of the slightest use to the party, though I should be proud of any opportunity of showing my attachment to its principles.[140]

In this era of political flux, party lines were blurred and inconsistent. The Liberal Party accommodated Peelites and Radicals, temperance advocates and brewers, Methodists and High Churchmen, and little Englanders and Imperialists.

Rosebery attracted attention and actively groomed himself as a rising

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[138] Rhodes James, p. 47.

[139] Lord Edmond Petty Fitzmaurice, Life of Lord Granville (2 vols., London, 1905), vol. ii, p. 10.

[140] RP, MS 10187, f. 14, Rosebery to Granville [copy] dated January 31, 1869.

man. In May 1870, Rosebery met the Queen and, in September 1870, he spent a few days with the Royal family at Balmoral. Rosebery was on particularly close terms with each of the three sovereigns of his lifetime: Victoria, Edward VII and George V. Though he had not yet spoken in the Lords, in June 1870, Rosebery wrote a letter to the Editor - his first - to express his dissatisfaction with his position in the Lords. He disagreed with Granville that young peers were encouraged to speak in the House of Lords.[141]

Rosebery attracted the attention of the Liberal hierarchy and, in 1871, Granville renewed his invitation, "It would be very good of you to second the address this year. If you are ready to give the proof of confidence in Gladstone's gov't pray let me know."[142] Rosebery responded,

> I am certainly not wanting in 'confidence in the government,' but with all sincerity very much so in regard to my adequately performing such a duty as you propose to me. However, if you ~~can really find nobody who would suit your purpose~~[143] wish it, I will try and do my best and you must not blame me if that be very bad.[144]

On February 9, 1871, the Queen delivered her speech from the Throne in person for the first time since the death of the Prince Consort. In his maiden address, Rosebery addressed several issues but emphasised Scottish affairs,

> My Lords I now come to the paragraph in the speech of paramount importance to many in this house - to none more so than myself: I mean that relating to education in Scotland. No country deserves more

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[141] Letter signed, "Semper Ego Auditor Tantum," in The Times, June 17, 1870, p. 12, attributed to Rosebery in Arthur Irwin Dasent, John Thadeus Delane: Editor of the Times (2 vols., London, 1908), vol. ii, pp. 263 - 4.

[142] RP, MS 10072, f. 130, Granville to Rosebery dated January 2, 1871.

[143] These words were crossed out in the draft. The original is not part of the Granville papers at the Public Record Office. These papers are not indexed and generally are haphazardly ordered. This reflects Granville's own carelessness. Undoubtedly, he destroyed many letters.

[144] RP, MS 10072, f. 136, Rosebery to Granville [draft] dated January 6, 1871.

> than Scotland that her educational efforts should be fostered by the Imperial government because in no country is there such an intense solicitude on the subject.[145]

Even his future adversary, the Duke of Richmond(**), noted that Rosebery demonstrated a "conspicuous ability."[146]

After 1868, Rosebery spent more time in Dalmeny, and became increasingly interested in Scottish affairs. He spoke in the Lords, and he spoke directly to the people. On November 3, 1871, Rosebery delivered his first major political address to the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution on the Union of 1707. This was quite an honour for a man who had yet to celebrate his 25th birthday. One explanation for this honour may be that Rosebery's Uncle Bouverie, a prominent member of the Institution, may have used his influence to secure Rosebery's selection. Otherwise, the choice of Rosebery is difficult to explain, but brilliantly conveys the expectations which many had for him.

Rosebery's connection with the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution has been overlooked by his earlier biographers, but it provides an important key to understanding his rise to power and prominence in Edinburgh. As Morton asserted in his recent thesis, the Institution was "exclusive in membership, high in status and all important to the networks of power in mid-century Edinburgh."[147] Its presidents included Macaulay, Brougham, Carlyle and Gladstone. Rosebery became a life member in 1871, a director in 1873 and

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[145] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 204, col. 23, February 9, 1871.

[146] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 204, col. 28, February 9, 1871. The Earl of Derby noted in his diary, "Westminster moved the address ... Ld Rosebery seconded, showing much promise; if he gives up racing and sticks to business, he will do well," in John Vincent (ed.), The Diaries of Edward Henry Stanley, 15th Earl of Derby (1826 - 93) (London, 1994), p. 75.

[147] Graeme Morton, Unionist-Nationalism: The Historical Construction of Scottish National Identity Edinburgh, 1830 - 1860 (Edinburgh, Ph.D, 1994), p. 125.

President in 1898 following Gladstone's death.[148] He made many important contacts which later served him well. The membership of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution included, Sir William Gibson-Craig(**) (director from 1849), a power-broker in Scottish politics, Bouverie Primrose (member from 1858), Rosebery's uncle, James Donaldson(**) (director from 1865 and vice-president 1881 - 82), the Principal of the Royal High School, Sir Alexander Grant (a director from 1869), the Principal of the University of Edinburgh, Lord Young (director from 1876), a former Lord Advocate, A. Taylor Innes (director from 1878), an ardent voluntary, and J. R. Findlay, the owner of The Scotsman (director from 1880).[149]

Rosebery's address was thoroughly researched and well delivered. At first glance, he conceded, the Union resembled the bargain of Glaucus,[150]

> Scotland, again, lost in splendour by ceasing to be a kingdom and becoming a province. Her aristocracy became place-hunters in London, the pliant tools of the ministry of the day. She lost her legislature, and gained in exchange a few votes in an alien senate which in no one respect represented her.[151]

However, over time, the Scots reaped the benefits of this marriage especially through their connection with the growing British Empire. The address was not merely an academic discourse. Rosebery urged his audience to draw upon the example of this Union, to heal the dangerous divisions in Britain,

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[148] W. Addis Miller, The Philosophical: A Short History of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution and its Famous Members and Lectures, 1846 - 1948 (Edinburgh, 1949), p. 28.

[149] Miller, The Philosophical, p. 11 ff.

[150] Rosebery alluded to the mythological character, Glaucus, who as a sign of friendship exchanged his armour with Diomedes. Glaucus got the worse of the bargain: his armour was gold and Diomedes' armour was brass.

[151] Rosebery, "Address to the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution," November 3, 1871, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 99.

> Great as that Union was, a greater still remains. We have in our generation, if we would remain a generation at all, to effect that union of classes without which power is a phantom and freedom a farce. In these days, the rich man and the poor gaze at each other across no impassable gulf; for neither is there in this world an Abraham's bosom of calm beatitude.[152] A powerless monarchy, an isolated aristocracy, an intelligent and aspiring people, do not together form the conditions of constitutional stability. We have to restore a common pulse, a healthy beat to the heart of the commonwealth. It is a great work, the work of individuals as much as of statesmen, alien from none of us, rather pertinent to us all.[153]

Rosebery recognised that there were serious divisions within Britain and also that his class - the aristocracy - had a share of the blame. Rosebery also used this opportunity to address the plight of modern Scotland,

> One of the great merits of the Scotch was patience. But it might not have struck everybody, that if we were a little less patient we might get a great deal more - that if there was a little more cry, there might be a little more legislative wool.[154]

This patience had almost expired. In the years which followed, Rosebery raised this cry and eventually secured more "legislative wool."

In addition to appealing as a Scot to a Scottish audience, Rosebery also used his public addresses to agitate the political waters and demonstrate his progressivism. Just as Foster described Lord Randolph Churchill as a character in a political novel,[155] Rosebery appears to march out of the pages of Disraeli's Sybil or Coningsby - the young aristocrat championing the cause

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[152] Allusion to Jesus' parable of the Rich man and Lazarus, Luke, chapter 16, verses 19 - 31.

[153] Rosebery, "Address to the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution," p. 104.

[154] Rosebery, "Address to the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution" [Responding to Thanks], November 3, 1871, in The Scotsman, November 4, p. 3.

[155] R. F. Foster, Lord Randolph Churchill: A Political Life (Oxford Paperback ed., Oxford, 1988), p. 7.

of the poor working man or farmer. In the address mentioned above, Rosebery expressed his sympathy with the underclasses whom he characterised as "the volcano beneath."[156] Rosebery's mother objected to such violent language and her concern prompted a revealing response,

> But the phrase[157] to which you object, I never said or hinted that where the heart of the aristocracy is touched, or on a great crisis, the aristocracy do not do their duty. But I maintain and no Liberal man can say otherwise, that the House of Lords is isolated in sympathies from the country. And I say that no Liberal can say otherwise because the House of Lords rejects those measures which the country, through its representatives, has ratified. On that ground therefore I hold that I had a perfect right to use the word 'isolated.' At the same time no one can deny the noble qualities and individuals of the aristocracy. But you say that 'Men are not better esteemed in other classes for deprecating their own.' I am not sure that I have deprecated my own, but whether that be so or not, it seems to me that your argument strikes at the very root of political morality. I hope it will be long in England before people act or speak merely to please a class or classes. Forgive my long rigamarole suggested by your letter which opened a new light to me, as I did not think that anyone had taken the same view of the expression.[158]

Rosebery did not avoid the glaring inequities of his own age, though he himself was an aristocrat and was neither ashamed of his wealth nor reluctant to demonstrate its vast extent. The last sentence is instructive. Like Gladstone, Rosebery was liable to misinterpretation, though he considered himself to be plain and clear. Rosebery often puzzled his allies and adversaries by his speeches.

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[156] Rosebery, "Address to the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution," in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 105.

[157] "In this country the artificial barriers which separate class from class are high enough, but, thank God, they are not insuperable."

[158] Quoted in Crewe, vol. i, p. 63. Crewe dated the letter November 24, 1870 but it must be 1871. The letter from Rosebery's mother which prompted this reply does not exist in the Rosebery Papers.

On September 28, 1872, Rosebery received the Freedom of South Queensferry (clearly a recognition of his family's local influence) and challenged his audience that, "they must all acknowledge that the condition of agricultural labourers in parts of this kingdom had been almost a reproach to their civilisation."[159] As a large landowner speaking to a mainly agricultural audience, Rosebery was taking a progressive and naturally popular stance. He was concerned for the individual, but his greater concern was for the health of the body politic.[160] An underclass (or a nation in the Empire) which was too long oppressed or ignored was a great danger to the country at large. Tyranny or inequality can lead to the even greater perils of revolution and anarchy. While these themes will be discussed in Chapter 7, this address is an early example of Rosebery's attempt to reform in order to preserve. This address of a 24-year-old Scottish peer was fully reported by The Times and The Scotsman; Rosebery was attracting attention. He was earning the allegiance and abiding affection of the common people.

Rosebery did not merely seek to please his audience but he also addressed divisive Scottish issues. The divide between Protestant and Catholic, and the sharp break within Presbyterianism between the Auld Kirk, the Free Kirk and Voluntaries presented serious if not insurmountable challenges in devising an educational system satisfactory to all Scots. In a debate which often focused upon the different strains of Presbyterianism, Rosebery spoke for the growing number of Roman Catholic children,

> I do not believe in the charity which meets two ragged children in the street, which asks them what their religion is, and when one answers, "I am a Protestant," says, "Come home little Protestant and take your porridge: but as for you little Catholic, you may die or starve or

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[159] Rosebery, "Address at South Queensferry," September 28, 1872, in The Scotsman, September 30, p. 6.

[160] Rosebery was extremely popular with his own tenantry in England and Scotland, though he did not actively participate in the daily maintenance of his estates.

> emigrate, it is no matter to me. I do not agree with any of the articles of your dogma, and therefore you may be left to your own ways and your own doing." That, as I have said is in my view a very narrow spirit of charity.[161]

Taking this principled but unpopular stand, Rosebery highlighted the difficulty of providing religious education in Scotland. This speech, however, suggests a naivete which typified Rosebery's response to the complex Scottish Church Question.

Governmental Overtures

When Gladstone formed his first Cabinet in 1868, Rosebery (age 21) was too young to be included. On February 16th, 1872, Rosebery was offered a lordship in waiting as a junior minister representing the Board of Rating, but, characteristically, he refused this honour on the grounds of his own unworthiness. This refusal may have had greater implications than Rosebery considered at the time. Gladstone believed that a man must begin a ministerial career in a junior position before progressing to posts of greater responsibility.[162] The post was of little intrinsic importance, but it would have placed Rosebery on the first rung of the ministerial ladder well-positioned for promotion in 1880 when Gladstone formed his second Cabinet.

A second honour was nearly refused. On May 25, 1873, Rosebery grudgingly accepted Gladstone's second offer of the Lord Lieutenancy of Linlithgow, a position previously held by his grandfather. His reluctance is somewhat surprising given his conversation with Disraeli in 1865, in which the Conservative leader noted the value of Lord Lieutenancies, "They

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[161] Quoted in Crewe, vol. i, p. 64. n.d. [1872 - 1874?].

[162] Two obvious exceptions were John Bright in 1868 and Joseph Chamberlain in 1880 who entered the Cabinet without any ministerial experience, but each man had a long career of public service and could not be overlooked.

influence the county gentlemen to a great extent. For instance suppose a gentleman wishes to be on the Commission of the peace, he makes up to the Lord-Lieutenant by exerting himself for the party."[163] Rosebery was compelled to accept this honour by his uncle, Bouverie Primrose who had been enlisted by Gladstone and Granville. Primrose's letter of rebuke to his nephew provides valuable insights,

> Such incomprehensibility is not to the advantage of a man's public or private character, and is liable to give rise to a number of false surmises which may not only influence the public and private estimation in which he is held, but be made to recoil upon himself in ways he least expects, at moments not the least looked for and in modes most disagreeable and permanently annoying.[164]

Rosebery's humility - which does seem affected - was in danger of being interpreted as apathy or arrogance. This perception would have seriously damaged his fledgling political career and Rosebery grudgingly accepted this minor honour.

After Rosebery accepted the Lord Lieutenancy, he received the following congratulations from Sir William Gibson-Craig, an influential Scottish politician who had been on the platform when Rosebery delivered his address to the Philosophical Institution in 1871,

> I am sure you will believe my congratulations are sincere when I tell you how much I rejoice that you have accepted the Ld Lieutcy as is announced. It puts you in your proper place in the County & I am quite certain that in a very short time & when you have had more experience of Public life you would have greatly regretted it if you had

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[163] RP, MS 10187, f. 6, a record of a conversation with Disraeli on September 5, 1865, at Raby Castle.

[164] Quoted in Rhodes James, p. 72. This letter is not in the Rosebery Papers at the NLS.

persisted in declining - your Uncle Bouverie is quite delighted.[165]

Rosebery had influential contacts in Edinburgh and Midlothian enabling him to rise rapidly in the party and to create his own political machine.

In a chamber noted for lethargy, Rosebery was active in debates and committees. In 1872, he participated on the Select Committee on Endowed Schools and Hospitals (Scotland). Though its report was presented with no conclusions, Rosebery's activity is noteworthy. During the questioning, he expressed his concern for the instruction of the poor and for Jewish and Roman Catholic children.[166]

On February 20, 1873, Rosebery moved for a Royal Commission on the Supply of Horses.[167] Rosebery's connection with the turf was generally viewed as a liability in Liberal circles, but in this his first major speech in the Lords, he focused his attention on the shortage of horses which imperilled the nation's security - especially in a time of war - and threatened the well being of her farmers. Thus, he turned a liability - a love of the turf - into an asset. Addressing his critics, he lamented, "all the evils to which flesh is heir, all the weaknesses to which humanity is liable, every failing and every misdeed - all were unsparingly attributed to the turf."[168] He defended the turf, by maintaining that "it afforded amusement to many thousands of the poorer classes."[169] Concerning the charge of encouraging gambling and profligacy,

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[165] RP, MS 10073, f. 201, Gibson-Craig to Rosebery dated June 4, 1873. Gibson-Craig and Rosebery were members of Edinburgh's New Club, a centre of Scottish Liberalism.

[166] Reports from Commissioners, "Endowed Schools and Hospitals (Scotland)," 1873, vol. xxvii.

[167] Under his portrait (# 225) in the Vanity Fair Album (1876), was the quip, that Rosebery "made a speech upon horses which suggested much hope that he would some day find somewhat to say of men."

[168] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 214, col. 706, February 20, 1873.

[169] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 214, col. 706, February 20, 1873.

he retorted, "to revive an old French saying, to abolish gambling by putting down races would be like attempting to abolish rain by suppressing the gutters."[170] These remarks further endeared him to the working classes who enjoyed race meetings. Rosebery tried to place the discussion on a higher plane, "this was not a question of party. It was pre-eminently a national question."[171] When it suited him, Rosebery presented himself as a man above partisanship, particularly if it augmented his popularity.

Granville, the Foreign Secretary, agreed to appoint a Select Committee rather than a Royal Commission as Rosebery had requested. The select committee included such prominent figures as the Duke of Cambridge, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Richmond, Lord Lansdowne and Lord Rosebery. At the first meeting on February 27, 1873, Lord Rosebery was voted to take the chair which he held throughout the fifteen days of meetings. Rosebery's stewardship of the proceedings was competent and effective.

To gather further data, Rosebery drafted a memorandum to Granville dated March 10, 1873 requesting information from Paris, Vienna, St Petersburg, and Berlin on the provision and current supply of horses, with particular emphasis upon their supply in a time of war.[172] This enabled Rosebery to closely observe the operation of the Foreign Office and the complexities involved in preserving Britain's security at home and abroad. The Select Committee report was published on July 18, 1873. A deficiency of horses was admitted, but the report concluded "in this country, Government interference in such matters is justly unpopular, even when practicable. Much more is to be hoped for from private enterprise."[173] The supply of horses was

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[170] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 214, col. 707, February 20, 1873.

[171] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 214, col. 713, February 20, 1873.

[172] Reports from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Horses, 1873, vol. xiv, Appendix B, p. 336.

[173] Select Committee of the House of Lords on Horses, 1873, vol. xiv, p. v.

problematic, but Rosebery could not countenance greater governmental interference which was the inverse of the traditional school of liberalism to which Rosebery (like Gladstone) was attached.

The year 1874 witnessed the first attempt by Rosebery to reform the House of Lords. He was a member and later the chairman of a Select Committee on the Scotch and Irish Peerage. Its report recommended the end of new Irish peerages and an increase in Scottish representative peers from 16 to 21. The most significant observation was, "it is undesirable for a Scottish Peer not a Representative Peer should be placed on a footing different from that of an Irish Peer in the same position, and debarred from sitting in the House of Commons"[174] Rosebery underlined what he considered to be the main grievance:"the 18 Scotch peers who are not elected as representative peers cannot sit in either House of Parliament."[175] The recommendations of the committee were quickly ignored, but over the next decades, Rosebery frequently put forward schemes to reform the Lords.

Rosebery quickly was becoming a spokesman not only of advanced (but orthodox) Liberalism but also of Imperialism. His address to the Social Science Congress at Glasgow on September 30, 1874 attracted the attention and admiration of many in Scotland and beyond.[176] He admitted, "I can conceive no subjects more interesting than those which relate to the welfare of our labouring population"[177] and went on to demand compulsory education for all, better housing, factory regulations, and improved labour

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[174] Sessional Papers of the House of Lords, "Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Representative Peerage of Scotland and Ireland," 1874, vol. viii, p. iii.

[175] "Select Committee on the Representative Peerage of Scotland and Ireland," p. 16, question 122.

[176] "It is perhaps no exaggeration to say that in pure eloquence Lord Rosebery has never surpassed this address, and it must be regarded as one of the great incidents in his career." Renwick, Life and Work of Lord Rosebery, p. 29.

[177] Rosebery, "Address to Social Sciences Congress," Glasgow, September 30, 1874, in The Scotsman, October 1, pp. 5 - 6.

conditions. Rosebery acknowledged, "we can only come to the hackneyed conclusion, that the sole remedy for this state of things is education, a humanising education." Education was a key not only for domestic advances but it also equipped those who went forth to populate the Empire. Rosebery argued the interests of Britain and the colonies were naturally intertwined. This is an early manifestation of Rosebery's Imperialism which grew and matured.

This speech was well reported, and again placed him before the public's notice. A contemporary reminiscence of George Russell is revealing,

> Billy Rogers the well known rector of Bishops Gate once said to me: "the first thing which made me think that Rosebery had real stuff in him was finding him at work in London in August, when everyone else was in a country house or on the moors. He was getting up his presidential address for the Social Science Congress in Glasgow in 1874."[178]

Rosebery also took steps to improve its distribution, "The address is not published as a pamphlet. It is printed in the annual volume, and I have had that part cut out and made into a pamphlet to give to some people who wanted it. I loathe the sight and mention of it."[179] Rosebery's modesty seems somewhat contrived. Rosebery like his mentor Gladstone understood and skilfully manipulated the mass media. Gladstone had manipulated the expanding newspaper press to become the 'people's William.' Through similar means, I suggest that Rosebery became the 'people's Archie.'

In the Lords, he spoke regularly on foreign matters ranging from the negotiations with the United States over the Alabama claims in 1872 to the

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[178] G. W. E. Russell, Prime Ministers and Some Others (London, 1916), p. 58.

[179] Petworth House MSS, PHA 5571, f. 24, Rosebery to his sister Constance dated October 10, 1874.

Bulgarian atrocities of 1876 which lured Gladstone from retirement. Rosebery not only asked searching questions but expressed a mature view on the practical considerations of devising the nation's foreign policy and fulfilling its treaty obligations.[180] He did not avoid a fight as he often tilted with Beaconsfield, Salisbury(**) and the Duke of Richmond and challenged the self-appointed exponent of Scottish Liberalism, the Duke of Argyll(**).

On October 4, 1876, at a banquet in Dumfries honouring Robert Jardine,[181] Rosebery delivered a powerful partisan speech,

> To come to the difference between Liberals and Conservatives, it has struck me that it can be defined by a simple mechanical illustration, as the difference between a locomotive and a donkey engine. The locomotive, as we all know, is a swift machine, and a certain sign of progress and of civilisation. The donkey engine is constructed to fulfil its usefulness in a much narrower sphere.[182]

At this time, Rosebery was a particularly fleet locomotive in the Liberal Party gaining attention and acclaim.[183]

Travels

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[180] In 1875, he expressed his concern about treaty obligations with Turkey, "if treaties were ridden rough shod over in that manner on the plea of material interests, which were undefined, danger must arise both to the security of nations and to the peace of Europe." Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 226, col. 21, July 26, 1875. In 1877, he urged "assuredly if we chose to disregard the validity of this Treaty [the Tripartite Treaty of 1856], a vital blow would be struck at the validity of all treaties." Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 233, col. 1429, April 19, 1877.

[181] Sir Robert Jardine (1825 - 1905) was a Liberal MP for Dumfries Burghs (1868 - 74) and Dumfriesshire (1880 - 92). He headed the trading house Jardine, Matheson & Company.

[182] Crewe, vol. i, p. 100. No reference given for this extract. Both The Times [October 6, 1876, p. 8] and The Scotsman [October 5, p. 3] report this speech in the third person. No two of the three accounts are the same. I have given Crewe's account because it is in the first person.

[183] John Bright noted in his diary for February 11, 1876, "Dined with Mr Gladstone. His son and bride there and Lord Rosebery whom I met for the first time. Intelligent and Liberal; my impression of him very favourable." John Bright, Diaries (London, 1930), p. 376.

Rosebery - a young man of property and position - travelled extensively on the continent from an early age.[184] On these excursions, he lived in luxury and met European royalty and leaders of State - contacts which later aided him at the Foreign Office. However, Rosebery's sights went beyond Europe to the vast new world. In 1872, his friends recommended "a yacht & a two year cruise about the Empire on which the sun never sets ... No one ever really understands Colonial views until he has seen the Colonies."[185] On September 30th, Rosebery set sail for the United States and Canada. This was his first excursion to the new world.[186] He visited New York, Salt Lake City, Chicago, Niagara Falls, Ottawa, Quebec, Montreal, Boston, and Washington, D. C.[187] He met President Ulysses S. Grant and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. He formed lasting friendships with Sam Ward,[188] a lobbyist of the Democratic Party, and William Hurlbert,[189] the editor of the New York World. This extended excursion was a great opportunity for the young peer. On the return voyage to London, Rosebery reflected,

> And so my dream is over. I suppose I have been there but can I be

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[184] He first visited his beloved Naples in 1854. At Easter, 1864, he accompanied Johnson, his tutor to Rome, and thereafter, he made frequent excursions to the continent. In Autumn 1868, he travelled with Lord Bute to St Petersburg and Moscow. Crewe, vol. i, p. 40.

[185] RP, MS 10073, f. 114, Lawley to Rosebery dated October 31, 1872. Rosebery's letter which prompted this response has not survived. Lawley's papers are not known to exist.

[186] Rosebery's non-European travels were as follows: September - December 1873, The United States and Canada; October 1874 - January 1875, the United States and Cuba; October - November 1876, the United States; 1883 - 1884, America, New Zealand, Australia, Ceylon, India, Aden and Egypt; and finally October 1886 - March 1887, India and Egypt.

[187] For a full account of this journey, see A. R. C. Grant (ed.) with Caroline Combe, Lord Rosebery's North American Journal - 1873 (London, 1967).

[188] Samuel Ward (1814 - 1884) was the brother of Julia Ward Howe (the author of the "Battle-Hymn of the Republic"). An erratic businessman, he went through at least two fortunes. His great social skills and his connections with financiers and politicians earned him the title, 'King of the Lobby.'

[189] William Hurlbert (1827 - 95) was described by Lawley as "the most distinguished and visionary journalist in the U.S. ... A man of immense but erratic information: a charming talker: a little mad." RP, MS 10073, f. 217, Lawley to Rosebery dated August 18, 1873.

> sure. At any rate I am back in England. Miserably smoky and narrow as ever. Is it a dream that I have been in a country where all are born equal before the law? Where every man has the means of obtaining the dearest object of the Anglo-Saxon's heart, a plot of land of his own on which to live and die?[190]

Rosebery gained important insights into American politics and culture, but he did not achieve a balanced portrait of the nation. Rosebery ate at the best restaurants, stayed at the finest hotels, and met the most interesting people; it is not surprising that he had a strong affection for the United States.

In 1874, Rosebery visited the Southern States and Cuba. From the 1860s, Rosebery was intrigued by the ill-fated Confederacy - one of the lost causes in which he delighted. He met Jefferson Davis, former President of the Confederacy, and General P. G. T. Beauregard, who claimed to fire the first shot of the Civil War. Rosebery was treated to many interesting and often contradicting anecdotes about the Civil War - conversations in which he delighted. In a short travel diary, he recorded his impressions and experiences. On December 24, 1874, he made the following notation in Cienfuegos, Cuba, "A man left to his own mind should feel himself in a temple into which the light comes coloured and enriched by knowledge and experience, and enhanced with the ineffable splendour of the future."[191] In the 1870s, Rosebery gained many new friendships and perspectives through his extensive travels. Instead of relying upon the observations of others Rosebery had first-hand experience.

The general optimism of his journal contrasts sharply with the sentiments which he put to verse in the following year,

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[190] Grant (ed.), Rosebery's North American Journal, p. 138, entry dated December 28, 1873.

[191] RP, MS 10192, p. 4, Rosebery's journal entry dated December 24, 1874.

May 7, 1875
Born on this day. Now silent years have rolled,
And merged their motion in the swell of time:
Childhood and youth have cast their crowns of gold
Before the throne of mystery sublime.

-

Born on this day. The Sheen of sunrise gone,
The dawn's cool rapture and unreasoning life:
Pass we in reverence to the mellower morn
Where zeal is rivalry and work is strife.

-

The cup of pleasure has not lost its savour,
Shall we not quaff where we often have quaffed?
Winking and smiling with its palled sweet flavour,
Shall we not laugh where we often have laughed?

-

Leave it a while and gaze upon thy years
The years to come that break upon thy dream:
How cold they glitter, like a grove of spears;
How sharp their points, how sinister they gleam.

-

Their edges tipped with sunset, and around
A darkness palpable, a chill of death:
Ah me, how ghastly fly this fatal ground,
Back to the flowery meads with bated breath.

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Thou canst not turn: for like a bison herd,
With fiery nostril and with cruel hoof,
They come, thy days gone by, thy pledges heard,
Thy secret Gods - thou canst not hold aloof.

-

The dreams of boyhood and the hopes of pride,
The high ambitions that have torn thy soul:
Live on and rush with them - or creep aside
And die, unpitied, wounded in a hole.[192]

This is one of a few surviving poems by Rosebery. Though it is undistinguished artistically, it raises some important questions concerning its author. Self-pity and pride mingled with egotism are evident, but even more apparent is the chord of pessimism and sombre resignation. This poem was

[192] RP, MS 10190, May 7, 1875, ff. 16 - 17.

penned by a carefree *bon vivant* with a bright future, yet it seems more appropriate to a Calvinist of greater than usual gravity. Rosebery's active mind responded well to new experiences and stimulating company, but left to himself his thoughts and perceptions darkened. In 1876, in sharp contrast to the above poem, Disraeli recorded Rosebery's youthful excitement, "Rosebery came up to me and talked very well - just come from America - his third visit, and full as an egg of fun and quaint observation."[193] The public Rosebery and the private Rosebery were often at odds.

Rosebery's third trip to the United States (referred to by Disraeli above) came at a time of one of its great turning points: the Presidential Election of 1876. Though Samuel Tilden, the Democratic candidate, most certainly won the election, Rutherford Hayes was named the victor based on dubious returns from the Southern States.[194] The Democrats did not challenge the election results, and in return the Republican Party ended the military occupation of the Southern States. In America, this was an age of machine politics. In the great cities, powerful bosses, such as Boss Tweed of Tammany Hall[195] built local empires fuelled by corruption and sustained by patronage. Rosebery made the following notation during his trip,

> Why Democratic Govts tend to corruption
> Democratic govts are weakened by their organizers from the fear, derived from European history, that Govt is apt to be too strong for the liberties of the people. Hence they run into the opposite extreme

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[193] An extract from Disraeli to Lady Bradford dated December 8, 1876, in Monypenny and Buckle, The Life of Benjamin Disraeli, vol. ii, p. 970.

[194] Rosebery noted in his literary journal, "on the night of Nov. 7, the day of the presidential election the Democrats went to bed secure of victory. But it was discovered next day they had only got 184 electoral votes whereas a bare majority is 185 ... Should Hayes be declared returned I verily believe there will be civil war." Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 2, f. xxi, [November 7, 1876].

[195] William Marcy Tweed (1823 - 1878) built a personal empire in the City of New York amassing millions of dollars through graft, corruption, and bribery. He was the head of Tammany Hall - the headquarters of the New York City Democratic Party. He was eventually convicted of fraud and he died in prison.

> & weaken it so much that it can only be carried on by improperly bribing its supporters. In America, every official must be a legionary of the party in power.[196]

Scottish politics had little regulation which allowed and even necessitated a less overt system of patronage and management to develop. By observing American machine politics, Rosebery realised the immense amount of influence that could be secured through efficient organisation, and he put these lessons to use in carving out a position for himself in Scotland unrivalled since the days of Dundas.

Political Management

Rosebery saw the new world at a young and impressionable age and he soon applied his political skills and knowledge. In February 1877 - two months after returning from America - Rosebery along with W. P. Adam(**) inaugurated the East and North of Scotland Liberal Association (ENSLA) a forerunner of the Scottish Liberal Association. Following the landslide Conservative victory in 1874, the Liberals realised the imperative need to improve party communication and coordination.[197] Unlike its English counterpart, the ENSLA did not devise a party platform, but rather it tried to unite all strands of Liberalism. After the ENSLA was established, Rosebery invited Hartington to address its first general meeting. The purpose of Hartington's visit was two-fold. He addressed the ENSLA and contested the Edinburgh University Rectorship. Throughout Hartington's visit, Rosebery was his host and constant companion. Rosebery's popularity in Edinburgh and his knowledge of Scottish and University affairs aided Hartington's candidature and gave Rosebery valuable exposure which undoubtedly aided

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[196] Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 2, f. xxiii, dated November 12, 1876.

[197] For Britain, see H. J. Hanham, Elections and Party Management in the Time of Disraeli and Gladstone (London, 1959), and for Scotland, see Hutchison, A Political History of Scotland, 1832 -1924.

his own subsequent rectorial campaigns. Rosebery's first participation in university politics was the first occasion in which the rectorial candidates participated in the campaign.

The election of Rectors at Scottish universities was almost exclusively a political contest - a barometer to gauge the political atmosphere in the nation. Elections included prominent politicians of the day, and were conducted by students with the aid of outside provocateurs. At Edinburgh, Rosebery had a wide spectrum of allies: students, professors, alumni and powerful local leaders. Though little documentary material remains concerning the 1877 rectorial election, the surviving letters imply that Rosebery was instrumental behind the scenes, exerting his influence to secure Hartington's election.

Rosebery's assistance paid dividends when the results of the poll were announced on November 11. Hartington was easily elected by a margin of 932 - 684 over his Conservative opponent Richard Cross(**), the Home Secretary. Following the election, Hartington sought Rosebery's advice,

> Thanks for your telegram received this morning. I have written to T D Watters (I think it is his name, but have unfortunately destroyed his note) to Thank him & to ask him to thank others who have taken part in the election; but do you know whether I ought to write any more formal thanks & to whom?[198]

In addition, Hartington asked Rosebery about appointing an assessor and twice asked Rosebery to take the office himself. The University saw Rosebery as the connection to the new Lord Rector. On December 2, Principal Sir Alexander Grant wrote to Rosebery,

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[198] RP, MS 10074, f. 232, Hartington to Rosebery dated November 11, 1877.

> I may mention that we are a little anxious that Lord Hartington should not delay any longer appointing his assessor in the University court, as we are very short of hands in that court. I wish your Lordship could be persuaded to accept the assessorship as Lord Elgin accepted a similar position in the University court of St Andrews.[199]

Rosebery's eyes were set on a greater honour than a University assessorship.

During the contest, Hartington observed Rosebery in operation, and Rosebery saw the party leader in action. Compared to Gladstone and Disraeli, Hartington was clearly inferior. In terms of oratory, political savvy and intellect, Hartington was satisfactory but never extraordinary.[200] From Hartington's vantage point, Rosebery had indeed arrived. At the age of thirty, he had hosted the Liberal leader, presided over the newly constituted ENSLA, and attracted attention if not adulation wherever he went. Accepting the Freedom of Glasgow on November 5, 1877, Hartington witnessed Rosebery's wide popularity. After repeated calls, Rosebery addressed the audience,

> I am quite overcome by your kindness. I did not know that there were half-a-dozen people in Glasgow who knew of my existence - and I can honestly say that I only came today to watch what I may call the well-deserved triumph of my friend Lord Hartington, and I go back a happier man for having seen it.[201]

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[199] RP, MS 10074, f. 236, Principal Grant to Rosebery dated December 2, 1877.

[200] Hartington's rectorial address of January 31, 1879 demonstrates this point. He spoke of the audience's share in the nation's political future, "While the vastness of that share excites in different minds different emotions; whilst various opinions are held as to the responsibilities undertaken, and the means of meeting them; as to the advantages conferred upon our own people and those with whom we are connected; as to the expediency of extending and strengthening on the one hand, or one the other, of diminishing and loosening the ties which bind us to different communities, no one can for a moment doubt that it is the duty of a courageous and intelligent people to look boldly in the face the extent and nature of those responsibilities, together with the means at their disposal for undertaking them," in Bernard Holland, The Life of Spencer Compton, Eighth Duke of Devonshire (2 vols., London, 1911), vol. i, p. 250. Rosebery was not present on this occasion, see The Scotsman, February 1, 1879, p. 7.

[201] The Scotsman, November 6, 1877, p. 5.

The rectorial election demonstrated Rosebery's skill to create and exploit political opportunities. He did not, as other biographers assume, move naturally from strength to strength, but manipulated situations to first focus the public spotlight upon himself, and secondly to remain under that light. Rosebery was a consummate political boss. He fostered strong personal loyalty and he built a formidable political machine in the 1870s which he expanded in the 1880s.

Marriage

> To be in it is merely a bore. But to be out of it simply a tragedy. Society is a necessary thing. No man has any real success in this world unless he has got women to back him, and women rule society. If you have not got women on your side you are quite over. You might just as well be a barrister, or a stockbroker, or a journalist at once.
> Lord Illingworth in Oscar Wilde, A Woman of No Importance (1893)

To digress briefly, on March 20, 1878, Rosebery married Hannah de Rothschild (1851 - 1890), the only child and heir of Juliana Cohen (1831 - 1877) and Baron Meyer de Rothschild (1818 - 1874) - a partner in the great banking firm and a keen devotee of the turf. In her childhood, Hannah was friendly with Mary and Constance Primrose, Rosebery's sisters. Rosebery's connection with the turf proved fortunate as he and Hannah first met at Newmarket in 1868. The marriage sent ripples through Jewish and gentile society, because mixed marriages were relatively rare. The wedding was a spectacle and the guest list was impressive. Rosebery was married by one of his closest friends, Canon Rogers. Lord Carrington[202] was his best man. Lord Beaconsfield, in the midst of the Eastern Crisis, gave the bride away while the Prince of Wales

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[202] Robert Charles Wynn-Carrington (1843 - 1926), Baron Carrington, was educated with Rosebery at Eton and was very close friends with the Prince of Wales. He was later Governor of New South Wales (1885 - 90). He was created Earl Carrington in 1895 and Marquess of Lincolnshire in 1912.

and the Duke of Cambridge were witnesses. From almost all accounts, Archie and Hannah shared a deep and abiding love. Over the next four years, they had four children: **Sybil,**[203] **Margaret,**[204] **Harry**[205] and **Neil.**[206]

This alliance made Rosebery one of the wealthiest men of his age, with an estimated annual income of over £140,000 [£7,000,000 today]![207] As he confided to Mary Gladstone(**), his wealth brought no small degree of nuisance,

> Since my marriage, mankind (with a few brilliant exceptions) have appeared to me to consist of three classes.
> 1. People who abuse me because my wife has money.
> 2. People who want some of that money.

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[203] Lady Sybil Myra Caroline Primrose (1879 - 1955) married Sir Charles [later General] Grant (1877 - 1950). She edited the first Weekly War Newspaper, The Home Letter (1914 - 18). She wrote essays, poems and short stories which were published in several collections including Samphire (1912), The Chequer Board (1912), Founded on Fiction (1913), Dream Songs (1914) and The End of the Day (1922).

[204] Lady Margaret Primrose (1881 - 1967) married the Earl of Crewe in 1899. It was the wedding of the year. After her father's death, she assisted her husband in writing the first official biography of Rosebery.

[205] Albert Edward Harry Meyer Primrose (1882 - 1974), Lord Dalmeny and later 6th Earl of Rosebery, was educated at Eton and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, where he was an avid cricketer and sportsman. He was MP for Midlothian (1906 - 10) and served in France (1914 - 18). He succeeded his father as Lord Lieutenant of Midlothian (1929 - 64). During the Second World War he served as Regional Commissioner for Civil Defence in Scotland and later Secretary of State for Scotland during Churchill's Caretaker Government (1945). He was the President of the National Liberal Party (1945 - 57) and like his father was a keen devotee of the turf.

[206] Neil James Archibald Primrose (1882 - 1917) was Lord Rosebery's second son. As F. E. Smith noted [Viscount Birkenhead [F. E. Smith], Points of View (2 vols., London, 1922), vol. ii, p. 126], "the relations between Neil and his distinguished father were among the most touching in a life full of idealised love. The two men were indeed more like brothers in their easy and affectionate intimacy than like father and son." Neil was educated at Eton and New College, Oxford. He was MP for the Wisbech Division of Cambridge (1910 - 17). In 1915, he married Lady Victoria Alice Louise Stanley the daughter of the 17th Earl of Derby. He served as Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Foreign Office (1915), Parliamentary Military Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions (1916) and Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (1916 - 17) and Patronage Secretary to Lloyd George. He served in the Diplomatic Corps during the Great War and was killed by a stray bullet in Palestine on November 17, 1917.

[207] Rhodes James [p. 84] also noted that before 1909, income tax was negligible.

3. People who do both.[208]

Hannah also provided a connection with the most powerful and influential banking house in Europe and expanded Rosebery's already impressive social circle. As her cousin Lady Battersea noted, "Hannah became from the very outset of her married life, one of the most devoted and unselfish wives that ever lived. She furthered her husband's success in every way."[209] They entertained on a grand scale. Lady Rosebery was,

> always inviting local people whom she believed her husband ought to meet to Mentmore, Dalmeny and The Durdans, and she was probably the only person who made him do things which he did not want to do. Indeed, much of the popularity which Rosebery enjoyed in Edinburgh, Buckinghamshire and Epsom was due to his wife.[210]

Guest lists included royalty, Cabinet ministers, newspaper editors, artists and socialites. Both Mentmore and the Durdans were easily accessible from London, while Dalmeny, a few miles outside of Edinburgh, was ideal for hosting Scottish leaders.

Yet, the Rothschild connection was not without its liabilities. In an era of latent and even open anti-semitism, their marriage caused much unpleasant gossip. In foreign affairs, the family connection created complications with regard to the Egyptian question, because Disraeli had used Rothschild money to purchase the Suez canal shares.[211]

Aberdeen Rectorial Election

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[208] GP, Add MS 46237, f. 9, Rosebery to Mary Gladstone dated Waterloo Day [June 18], 1880.

[209] Constance, Lady Battersea, Reminiscences (London, 1922), p. 263.

[210] Rhodes James, p. 87.

[211] Blake, Disraeli, p. 583 - 4.

> Of all the memories of student life which remain with the Scottish graduate throughout his after life it is improbable that any are so vivid as those of the particular rectorial election and the particular rectorial address which fell within his own university career.[212]

In November, 1878, Rosebery was invited by the Liberal students of the University of Aberdeen to contest the rectorship under their banner. Rosebery's influence in Scotland was expanding. He first met the Aberdonian Liberals at the ENSLA General Meeting in November 1877 to which both the Aberdeen and the University of Aberdeen Liberal Associations sent delegations and addresses. These newly formed Liberal organisations saw this young, energetic peer in person. He was a desirable rectorial candidate. This election has not been fully treated by previous biographers, but it merits detailed attention.

This contest attracted interest from both parties. The Conservative students put forward Richard Cross, the Home Secretary. Cross had the support of his fellow Cabinet member, the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, who happened to be the Chancellor of the University of Aberdeen.[213] Rosebery's selection was not without conflict as Alexander MacBain,[214] lexicographer at the University of Aberdeen, reported on September 7, 1878,

> The first meeting was held on the 13th August with a vague idea of starting the campaign. Lord Aberdeen's name was mooted & the chairman was asked to write to him. His reply was submitted to a very full general meeting on the 23rd August. His lordship consented to stand on two conditions - Mr Forster's refusal & that the

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[212] A. Logan Turner, History of the University of Edinburgh 1883 - 1933 (Edinburgh, 1933), p. 347.

[213] In Scottish rectorial elections, students voted by nations. At Aberdeen, there were four nations. A successful rectorial candidate needed a majority in at least three nations. If the nations were split, the Chancellor cast the deciding vote - generally according to his own political affiliation.

[214] Alexander MacBain (1855 - 1907) was a teacher and Celtic Scholar who later became headmaster of the High School in Inverness.

election be non-political. The general feeling was against Mr Forster. He had done nothing, they said. He had some supporters & it was decided to write to him asking whether he would consent to stand again. Your Lordship's name was first brought publicly forward then; but a mistaken technicality refused to empower the committee to write you.

Mr Forster's answer was definitely negative. It was submitted to the third general meeting on Tuesday last; and all difficulties vanished. Your lordship's name was the first proposed & was very favourably received indeed. Then came Lord Aberdeen's. A few were for Mr Grant Duff, and helped by the Conservatives to split us up (the Liberals). The candidates were to be written to.

The doubts entertained as to the possibility of again running Mr Grant Duff & as to the wisdom of it were happily solved by his refusal personally expressed to a deputation that waited on him on his way North. He told them to transfer their allegiance to your Lordship and consider themselves fortunate if they secured you. Wh[ose] reply has its due effect, and all of his party I have spoken to are now your supporters.

This makes your lordship's prospects all that could be desired. The Liberals have now all accepted you as their candidate. But there must be a wide margin given for accidents. The feeling is much stronger in your favour than in that of Lord Aberdeen.

And about him - his local influence has turned out to be far less than what was at first imagined. While the more pronounced Tories and several others of the party think him too weak a candidate & speak of Mr Cross or Lord Salisbury, could they get him: but his supporters make out a good case when they say that a high Tory wd. not be carried, since the Lord Rector is expected by all sides, to help [in] getting the reforms of the University Commission passed in Parliament.

His lordship you observe says "no politics," but he is the Conservative candidate: The political element must out [sic]: it will be a great factor - very great - in the election, I have no doubt; And your Lordship's presence here in October will greatly enhance your popularity.

Your Lordship's chance of success is therefore very great as far as we have gone. The medical students are not fairly represented as yet, but we may count on them.[215]

Rosebery's supporters were active early in the proceedings. His popularity was difficult to understand otherwise, because he had no connections with

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[215] RP, MS 10074, f. 273, MacBain to Rosebery dated September 7, 1878.

Aberdeen and had never spoken there. Also, this account shows that while Rosebery's star was in the ascendancy, Forster's(**) star was in declension. Difficulty arose because both Gladstone and Granville wanted Lord Aberdeen(**) to stand as a demonstration of his allegiance to the Liberal Party. Aberdeen, originally a Conservative, was opposed to Beaconsfield's eastern policy, but he had not made any firm commitment to the Liberals. Rosebery's position as an advanced Liberal peer was a great asset to his candidacy while Aberdeen's undefined position was a hindrance. The correspondence shows that Rosebery, though personally attached to Gladstone, was far from deferential,

> I received a formal letter as the result of a meeting of the students, asking me to be a candidate. I wrote back to say that that was an invitation which it would be as presumptuous in me to refuse as to seek; & I placed myself at the students' disposal. There was nothing about politics in either letter & I have never thought any more about it. Now I do not gather clearly what I am expected or desired to do, but I shall be glad to do all I can. If I can find a bridge or excuse I am willing to withdraw, but it is perfectly certain that another candidate will be proposed in my place, so I do not see how that would better Lord Aberdeen's position. However, I place myself in your hands.[216]

His contention that "there was nothing about politics in either letter" is clearly contradicted by MacBain's letter and gives an indiction of Rosebery's zeal to secure this prize. When Rosebery single-mindedly pursued a goal, he was difficult to divert or defeat. Pressing his case on September 24, Rosebery sent Gladstone a copy of Aberdeen's letter to The Scotsman, in which Aberdeen wrote,

> I accepted the invitation to be nominated for election on the clearly expressed condition that my candidature should be regarded as free from a political aspect, otherwise I should entirely place myself in a false position, my views being such as to prevent my being a pledged

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[216] GP, Add MS 44288, f. 15, Rosebery to Gladstone dated September 20, 1878.

adherent of either party at the present time.

In his accompanying note to Gladstone, Rosebery conveyed the urgency of the situation while attempting to appear disinterested,

> As time was precious if anything is to be done, I telegraphed to you this morning. It is no self denial for me to withdraw, as the rectorship in Aberdeen is no object to me, but I thought a refusal on my part would be open to misconstruction. Why am I to expiate his political aberrations is a point that I do not clearly understand.[217]

Judging from the frequency and urgency of his correspondence, this election was indeed very important to Rosebery both personally and politically. He was unwilling to forego this honour to appease anyone. Rosebery was willing to say 'no' to the Queen and the Prime Minister, but why did he not refuse the students of Aberdeen? The answer is: they represented the future.

By the first of October, the Liberal students of Aberdeen University appointed a deputation, "to take the opportunity of Lord Rosebery's presence in Aberdeen in a fortnight, to wait upon his Lordship, ascertain his views regarding university reform, and generally to put his candidature on a firmer footing."[218] On the following day, Rosebery was anxious and vexed,

> If I withdraw now, it will be said that it is because I should have been beaten. It appears that if I must speak with perfect frankness that as it is Lord Aberdeen who has got himself into this difficulty that it is he who should withdraw.[219]

This incident though potentially injurious to Rosebery's career, may have caused Gladstone's estimation of him to rise. Gladstone respected men who

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[217] GP, Add MS 44288, f. 18, Rosebery to Gladstone dated September 24, 1878.

[218] The Aberdeen Journal, October 2, 1878, p. 4.

[219] GP, Add MS 44288, f. 21, Rosebery to Gladstone dated October 2, 1878.

held firmly to their principles. During this time, Gladstone was weighing the invitation from Rosebery and Adam to contest Midlothian. Rosebery's forcefulness in pursuing and securing the Aberdeen Rectorship may have convinced Gladstone that Rosebery delivered what he promised.

Rosebery again helped his own cause by addressing the Aberdeen Liberal Association on October 18th, barely a fortnight before the election. He came very close to actually campaigning for the rectorship. Over three thousand people crowded into Aberdeen's Music Hall to hear Rosebery's address. Dr Webster, the chairman and president of the Aberdeen City and Aberdeen University Liberal Associations, introduced Rosebery, noting that, "such a reception is a sufficient evidence not merely of Lord Rosebery's personal popularity with his country, but of the ascendancy of those Liberal principles which are associated with Lord Rosebery's name."[220] As president of the ENSLA, Rosebery admitted, "I received an invitation from this association some time ago, but I was not able to avail myself of it, but I gladly come tonight."[221] It seems implausible that the nearness of his address and the rectorial election is a mere coincidence.

In a purely political address, Rosebery's Imperialism was apparent, "We are a great Empire, but our weakness is our frontiers and our strength is our people, we have enlarged our sources of weakness without increasing our people."[222] He lampooned the government and particularly Cross - who 'by coincidence' happened to be his opponent in the upcoming rectorial contest. Responding to Cross's recent accusation, Rosebery stated,

I do not quarrel with being called a Radical - it means one who looks

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[220] The Aberdeen Journal, October 19, 1878, p. 5.

[221] Rosebery, "Address to the Aberdeen Liberal Association," October 18, 1878, in The Aberdeen Journal, October 19, p. 5.

[222] The Aberdeen Journal, October 19, 1878, p. 6.

> at the root of things and is not satisfied with assertion without proof and the mere claptrap of invective - but I will say this when Cabinet ministers, holding high and responsible positions, Cabinet ministers who would not go to this meeting last year because they knew that their words would be weighed, when Cabinet ministers go about and utter statements of that sort about their opponents, it is time for the country to tell the Cabinet what it thinks of it.[223]

He hoped that the many students present would use their vote in the rectorial election to express their displeasure with the government.

This speech prompted the following letter from James Walker, the chairman of Rosebery's committee. At the first general meeting when Rosebery's name was officially proposed, Walker reported,

> The candidates brought forward in order were, Lord Aberdeen, your Lordship, and Mr Cross. According to the report of the chairman - who was at that time strictly neutral - fully two thirds of the meeting seemed in favour of your Lordship. Of the remainder, the greater part seemed to support Mr Cross, the supporters of Lord Aberdeen being in a small minority.[224]

Though Rosebery's oratory was powerful, Cross, as Home Secretary, had tangible power while Rosebery, an inexperienced opposition peer, was only a politician in potential.[225]

Rosebery was not universally well received. Marriage to a Jewess, ownership of racehorses, radicalism and alleged anti-sabbatarianism were all mentioned by his detractors. But his supporters were numerous. Rosebery continued to help his own cause. On November 6, ten days before the poll, Rosebery delivered a masterful speech to the Edinburgh Literary Institute in

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[223] The Aberdeen Journal, October 19, 1878, p. 5.

[224] RP, MS 10074, f. 284, James Walker to Rosebery dated October 31, 1878.

[225] The Aberdeen Journal, November 8, 1878, p. 3.

which he spoke on the themes of biography and patriotism which caused Granville to remark to Hartington, "what a brilliant speech Rosebery seems to have made! ... Adam says he is becoming a power in Scotland."[226] This address also prompted Robert Wallace,[227] the editor of The Scotsman, to write a favourable leader in the next day's paper, in which he noted that Rosebery,

> gave a practical demonstration of the valuable uses to which the lecture platform may be put. His Lordship is a lay preacher whom Scotchmen would not object to 'sit under' more frequently than they have hitherto had opportunities of doing, and like other preachers he is not the less pleasant to listen to that he does not bind himself to stick too closely to his text.[228]

Rosebery modestly objected to this praise, but Wallace defended himself,

> You have chosen to become a power for the promotion of Liberal ideas of a very satisfactory order & the 'Scotsman' as a humble but hearty advocate of all that is useful finds part of its interest & duty in giving you whatever prominence its means of publication allow.[229]

On November 16, Rosebery was returned by a majority of three votes carrying three of the four 'nations.'[230] According to The Aberdeen Journal, victory was secured because "the supporters of Lord Rosebery had the advantage from the outset of an uninterrupted canvas ... while Mr Cross's

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[226] Fitzmaurice, Life of Granville, vol. ii, p. 297, Granville to Hartington dated November 10, 1878.

[227] Robert Wallace (1831 - 1899) was a Minister of the Church of Scotland and later Professor of Church History at the University of Edinburgh (1872 - 76). He was joint-editor of The Scotsman with Cooper (1876 - 80). He concluded his varied career as an advanced Liberal MP for Edinburgh East (1886 - 99). He advocated Irish and Scottish Home Rule.

[228] The Scotsman, November 7, 1878, p. 4. Rosebery's speech appeared on p. 3.

[229] RP, MS 10074, f. 286, Wallace to Rosebery dated November 8, 1878.

[230] Rosebery's rectorial victory also inaugurated a new friendship with the out-going rector, W. E. Forster. [See RP, MS 10111, ff. 141 and 146, Foster to Rosebery dated November 21, and December 1, 1878]. This friendship was solidified in 1884 when Rosebery became a Vice-President in Forster's Imperial Federation League.

candidature dated only from a comparatively recent stage."[231] Walker offered his congratulations, and attributed the narrowness of the victory to the "English medical students - many of whom attend the classes for only one year who know little & care less for the affairs of the University."[232] This slim victory was another public rebuke for Disraeli's government. In 1877, Gladstone had secured the Glasgow Rectorship over Sir Stafford Northcote.[233] In 1877 and 1878, Cross had been defeated by Hartington and Rosebery respectively;[234] the tide was running in favour of the Liberals. Aberdeen was the first of Rosebery's four rectorships.[235] His victory solidified his position in Scotland and in the Liberal Party. He had contested and won an election far from his power base. At Aberdeen, he appealed to students drawn from the vast hinterland of Scotland who had a great role to play in preserving the Empire.

Midlothian Campaign

The Midlothian Campaigns of 1879 and 1880 marked Gladstone's resumption of the Liberal leadership, and established Rosebery as a power-broker in British politics. Officially retired, Gladstone's political life had not yet expired. Unable to secure reelection in Greenwich, he searched for a new constituency. Safe seats were offered, but Rosebery and Adam asked Gladstone to stand for Midlothian. It was a county seat held by Lord

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[231] The Aberdeen Journal, November 18, 1878, p. 3.

[232] RP, MS 10074, f. 288, Walker to Rosebery dated November 17, 1878.

[233] Gladstone soundly defeated Northcote by a margin of 1,153 to 609, and replaced Disraeli who had been rector for two terms. The Times, November 16, 1877, p. 5.

[234] In his memoir, A Political History, 1868 - 1900 (Privately printed), Cross makes no mention of either of these contests.

[235] Later, Rosebery was elected Rector of the Universities of Edinburgh in 1880, Glasgow in 1899 and St Andrews - the most Conservative of the Scottish Universities - in 1910.

Dalkeith,[236] the heir to Midlothian's wealthiest landholder, the Duke of Buccleuch.[237] Prior to the 1884 Reform Act, counties were largely the preserve of the great landowners. Gladstone's candidature was risky and victory was uncertain. Before he agreed to stand, Gladstone required assurance of probable victory, and he sought advice from Granville and Lord Wolverton.[238] Before any public pronouncement, Rosebery requested J. J. Reid(**) to

> ascertain what sort of requisition could be obtained in Midlothian for Gladstone as a candidate for the county. I cannot of course say anything positive but I am most anxious to know what answer you can give me. If necessary I could leave London tomorrow night & be in Edinburgh all Thursday, so if you in Edinburgh regard my presence as of importance please telegraph to me after you have seen the others. I need not tell you that I regard this as a vital matter, neither need I tell you that I should not now write without some reason on such a subject. But you can not be too prompt or too secret.[239]

As Secretary of the ENSLA, Reid was charged with the day-to-day management of the association. He was invaluable in drafting Gladstone and securing his return. Rosebery later reflected on Reid's value, "there was John James Reid the genial and active agent who seemed to be everywhere at the same time."[240] In his correspondence with Reid, Rosebery conveys his own urgency and a concern over the smallest details.

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[236] According to F. W. S. Craig (ed.), British Parliamentary Results, 1832 - 1885 (2nd ed., London, 1979), p. 583, Dalkeith was unopposed in 1857, 1859, and 1865. He was defeated in the Liberal sweep of 1868 but was returned in 1874 by a margin of 3,260 to 2,672 over Lord William Hay.

[237] As of 1883, the Duke of Buccleuch owned over 433,000 acres in Scotland with a yearly income of £173,000 (£8,650,000 today) but he had less than 3,000 acres in Midlothian [Complete Peerage, vol. ii, p. 273], whereas Rosebery owned 18,540 acres in Midlothian [Complete Peerage, vol. xi, p. 139].

[238] George Grenfell Glyn (1824 - 1887) was MP for Shaftesbury (1857 - 73) and Chief Liberal Whip (1867 - 73). He succeeded his father as 2nd Baron Wolverton in 1873.

[239] Reid MSS at NLS, MS 19623, f. 19, Rosebery to Reid dated May 28, 1878.

[240] Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," March 17, 1894, in The Times, March 19, 1894, p. 8.

It may be coincidental but in the midst of the Midlothian preparations a letter from Rosebery appeared in The Times, which had been read at Dalmeny during his homecoming celebrations on August 13, 1878,

> I wish you to announce to the tenants that I shall make a remission of 10 per cent on the rents due for last year. A succession of bad years culminating in what was almost a famine year constitute so exceptional a state of things that I feel compelled to disregard for once my conviction that such remissions are rarely equitable and are wrong in principle.[241]

The tenants who had asked for no abatement were taken aback. Considering the activities of the subsequent campaigns it would not be unreasonable to suggest that Rosebery remitted the rent in order to solidify his personal popularity among his tenantry, some of whom were electors.

In January, 1879, Gladstone officially accepted the Midlothian Liberal Association's invitation to stand for the constituency. He then conducted two campaigns (November/December 1879 and March/April 1880) which Disraeli contemptuously described as "pilgrimages of passion."[242] Rosebery understood the finer points about planning a campaign, maximising Gladstone's exposure and strengthening the perception of his close connection with Gladstone. Firstly, on November 24, before Gladstone arrived at Waverley Station, Rosebery appeared over an hour early driving "onto the platform in an open carriage and four with two outriders." When the train arrived Rosebery "helped Mr Gladstone alight and took Mrs Gladstone on his arm to the carriage."[243] Brooks in his recent article on Midlothian noted the extent of Rosebery's efforts,

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[241] The Times, August 17, 1878, p. 9.

[242] Richard Shannon, The Crisis of Imperialism (London, 1974), p. 139.

[243] "The Midlothian Campaign," November 24, 1879, in The Scotsman, November 25, p. 5.

> The arena in which Gladstone addressed his main outdoor audience was decorated with foliage supplied from Rosebery's wooded properties, and when Gladstone first arrived at Dalmeny he was met and escorted by a torchlight procession of some 200 retainers of the estate.[244]

The vast majority of those who heard Gladstone speak or who participated in the pageantry of the Midlothian campaigns were not electors. Rosebery's experiences in America proved to be useful models. In 1873, he had witnessed a Democratic Party convention,

> Last night I stood in Madison Square, and looking down Fifth Avenue there appeared a moving column of lights, clustering and silent. It might have been a squadron of angels marching to encounter the power of darkness. But as it came nearer I saw that it was a great army of human beings proceeding in silence and order to salute their chief.[245]

Rosebery planned Gladstone's speaking schedule and even advised him how to divide the various subjects which needed to be addressed. Rosebery hosted the Gladstones at Dalmeny. Rosebery kept the many important local leaders contented by hosting a luncheon where Gladstone met the conveners and the Committee of the Midlothian Liberal Association - men who were crucial to securing victory. Rosebery catered to both ends of the political spectrum. Later that same evening, he hosted an exclusive dinner for Gladstone and the local nobility.[246] In planning the campaign, Rosebery respected precedent but had a flair for the dramatic.

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[244] David Brooks, "Gladstone and Midlothian: The Background to the First Campaign," Scottish Historical Review, lxiv (1985), p. 56. For the full account of Gladstone's triumphal arrival on November 24, 1879, see The Scotsman, November 25, p. 5.

[245] Crewe, vol. i, p. 77. Crewe's description, "Torchlight Precession for the Democratic Convention before the Presidential Election, 1873," is problematic. There was no Presidential Election in 1873, but there was a convention for Democrats from the State of New York in October, 1873 during Rosebery's stay in the city. See The Times, October 17, 1873, p. 8.

[246] "The Midlothian Campaign," November 27, 1879, in The Scotsman, November 28, p. 6.

> I believe if [Gladstone] accepts, our best plan would be to organize a great Liberal Banquet to him in the Corn Exchange on the model of that given to Lord Beaconsfield in 1868. That would be a recognition by Scotland of his efforts for Liberalism in the past & of his fresh anxiety to serve Scottish Liberalism in this matter. But it must be done so as not to interfere with the Liberal leaders - Granville and Hartington, & therefore I underline the second point.[247]

The election presented a serious challenge. Rosebery had to walk a tightrope between his zeal for Gladstone and his loyalty to Hartington and Granville who officially led the party. During the election, a hagiographic biography of Gladstone was published with the following conclusion,

> Whenever the Liberal Party becomes once more thoroughly united - with a programme before it worthy of its achievements in the past - there is but one possible statesman who must be largely responsible for conducting its enterprises to a successful issue.... When the bow of Ulysses requires to be bent, only Ulysses can bend it.[248]

Likewise, Rosebery did little to dispel the perception that Gladstone remained the leader of the party in essence if not in name. In retrospect, as this passage suggests, Gladstone's return to power seemed natural and even inevitable. At the time, this was far from certain. If Rosebery cast his lot fully with the Grand Old Man - age 70 - and Gladstone either lost or declined to re-enter Government, Rosebery's political future would have suffered a severe if not fatal blow. Rosebery, however, used his influence and resources to avoid this contingency.

Rosebery used his extensive fortune liberally to support his party. As Hamilton later noted in his diary, "Rosebery also said he wanted to economise

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[247] Reid MSS, MS 19623, f. 52, Rosebery to Reid dated December 27, 1878. When Gladstone spoke at the Corn Exchange on November 29, 1879, Rosebery was in the chair. For a full account of the meeting see The Scotsman, December 1, p. 5.

[248] G. Barnett Smith, The Life of the Right Hon. William E. Gladstone (Popular Edition, London, 1880), p. 578.

a little. He had determined to pay the last General Election [i.e. 1880] expenses to which he had been put out of income, and these amounted to £50,000 [£2,500,000 today]!"[249] Rhodes James takes exception to this figure, but alas no documentation survives to support or refute Rosebery's claim.[250] Considering the number of 'faggot'[251] votes created by the Liberal party, this estimate may not be entirely out of proportion.

Rosebery generously funded the Scottish Liberal cause in general and Midlothian politics and Gladstone's candidacy in particular. Gladstone contested the 1880, 1885 and 1892 General Elections at Midlothian[252] and conducted campaigns in 1879, 1884 and 1890, but he paid none of his expenses. Each election was noted for its extensive preparation and elaborate execution and much of the added expense - incapable of being borne by the Midlothian Liberal Association - was paid by Rosebery. He was a great asset for Scottish Liberal organisations - an eloquent, youthful peer with an almost boundless supply of ready cash.

This election was the last to be waged before the passage of the Corrupt Practices Act in 1883 - which helped reduce bribery and other election irregularities. Both parties used all available means to improve their polling. Liberals frequently accused the Buccleuch interest of manufacturing 'faggot' votes, but they too, using Rosebery's power, prestige and funds, made hay while the sun shone. The Midlothian Conservatives were

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[249] Dudley W. R. Bahlman (ed.), The Diary of Sir Edward Walter Hamilton, 1880 - 1885 (2 vols., Oxford, 1975), vol. i, p. 297, June 30, 1882. Hereafter referred to as Bahlman (ed.), Hamilton's Diary, 1880 - 1885.

[250] Rhodes James, pp. 101 - 2.

[251] "A vote manufactured for party purposes, by the transfer to persons, not otherwise legally qualified, of sufficient property to qualify them as electors." The Oxford English Dictionary, vol. v.

[252] Gladstone was unopposed in 1886.

outmanoeuvred in their own game.[253] By February 1880, Reid wrote to Rosebery that 272 Liberal voters were added to the register through the building of new homes.[254] Conservatives changed their tactics. A pamphlet by 'A Scottish Liberal,' Mr Gladstone and Midlothian, A Letter to the Earl of Rosebery (1880), accused Rosebery of violating the restrictions which barred peers from active involvement in elections, and suggested that his efforts on Gladstone's behalf would be rewarded with a "strawberry leaf" - a promotion in the peerage. Rosebery was aware of these criticisms,

> The contest is already represented to be somewhat of a personal contest of mine. That idea should not be encouraged by any action on my part. It might well awaken the jealousies of the constituency if an idea got abroad that a peer were trying to force a candidate or contest on that constituency.[255]

Rosebery also defended himself to Gladstone,

> Ought I to take any notice of the Exchequer's little innuendo last night?[256] I call it 'little' for the leader of the House of Commons, in a lesser personage I should call it an impertinence. I have as you know, never interfered in Midlothian. I have not canvassed for you: I have not spoken on your behalf: I have not even attended your meetings. The most I am guilty of is the having had the honour of receiving you at my house, which even in the present ostracism of yourself and the

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[253] In January 1880, Reid wrote to Rosebery, "From what I can learn the Tynecastle workers buildings are rapidly approaching completion. The Tories seeing it could be done in so short a time are said to have attempted a rival movement, though not for working man inhabitants. Their attempt failed as the hard frost came on first after outside work and roofing on the original work." RP, MS 10075, f. 175, dated January 22, 1880.

[254] RP, MS 10075, f. 185, Reid to Rosebery dated February 3, 1880. In this letter Reid acknowledged Rosebery's cheque for £100 to make up for the shortfall at the November Corn Exchange meeting.

[255] Reid MSS, MS 19623, f. 54, Rosebery to Reid dated January 4, 1879.

[256] Sir Stafford Northcote, in response to a question about Peers' interference concerning Lord Cadogan, amused the Government benches, "Lord Rosebery - I really beg pardon of the House, but, talking of the influence of Peers with elections, Lord Rosebery's name slipped out entirely by accident, Lord Cadogan, I mean..." Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 250, col. 1203, February 23, 1880.

> Liberal party can hardly be deemed an offence against the privilege of the House of Commons.[257]

This accusation was largely true. As a peer, Rosebery was expressly forbidden to engage in electioneering. He accepted the letter of the law but he often violated its spirit - providing Gladstone with accommodation, transportation and material support while appearing at meetings with Gladstone and giving 'impromptu' speeches. On November 29, Rosebery was in the chair at the Corn Exchange (Edinburgh) meeting of the East and North of Scotland Liberal Association where he tried to distance himself and the meeting (of which Gladstone was the guest of honour and primary speaker) from the impending election, "The heart of the nation has been touched. And Gentlemen, we today have nothing to do with the special business which has brought Mr Gladstone down to Scotland. This is no electoral meeting."[258] It is not surprising that Rosebery's sincerity was questioned when directly after this meeting, he accompanied Gladstone to a mass rally at Waverley Station where there "was displayed an Earl's Coronet, having underneath the arms of Lord Rosebery and on either side a lion rampant and a Union Jack."[259] Rosebery maintained a high profile throughout the campaign. When Gladstone delivered his rectorial address at Glasgow on December 5, 1879, the audience demanded to hear Rosebery. Gladstone noted, "Rosebery has made a great impression, and is a hero not only in Edinburgh but in Glasgow."[260]

When the poll was announced on April 5th, over 15,000 people

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[257] GP, Add MS 44288, f. 38, Rosebery [in Hannah's hand] to Gladstone dated February 24, 1880.

[258] Rosebery, "Introductory Speech at Gladstone's Corn Exchange Meeting," Edinburgh, November 29, 1879, in The Scotsman, December 1, p. 5.

[259] "The Midlothian Campaign," November 29, 1879, in The Scotsman, December 1, p. 5.

[260] Agatha Ramm (ed.), The Political Correspondence of Mr Gladstone and Lord Granville, 1876 - 1886 (2 vols., Oxford, 1962), vol. i, p. 105, Gladstone to Granville dated December 21, 1879.

gathered at 120 George Street, Edinburgh,[261] to salute their new Member of Parliament. Out of a mere 3,260 electors, Gladstone secured 1,579 votes to Lord Dalkeith's 1,368.[262] Again, Rosebery delivered what he promised: he defeated the Duke of Buccleuch in his own backyard. A political career which had been moribund was resuscitated largely through the initiative and persistence of Rosebery. Gladstone realised that his host,

> is very decidedly a remarkable man, not a mere clever man: and is to be evidently the leader of the Liberal party in Scotland, & that in a sense beyond any, I should think, in which they have heretofore had a leader. From the first time I ever saw him I liked him & thought highly of him: but he has opened out upon me marvellously.[263]

The Edinburgh and Aberdeen rectorial elections demonstrated, and Midlothian certified, that Rosebery was a power-broker in Scotland.

In the victory-night celebrations, Rosebery also addressed the jubilant crowd,

> I, as a Midlothian man, I can tell you that no Midlothian man, however old he may be, or however long he may have to live will have spent a prouder night than this. It is a great night for Midlothian, a great night for Scotland, a great night for your county member, a great night for Great Britain, ay and a great night for the world ... In the county of Midlothian has been fought not a battle between Whig and Tory, or Liberal and Conservative, but the battle of constitutional government and oppressed nationalities throughout the world ... You are rewarded for having as your county member, the foremost man of Great Britain, the greatest champion of liberty that now lives in the world; and to use the words of Mr Pitt, I will only say that I now trust that Midlothian having saved herself by her exertions will now save Great Britain by

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[261] Rhodes James, p. 103. Rosebery rented this house for Gladstone's convenience. It proved to be a strategic location for delivering a victory address.

[262] Craig (ed.), British Parliamentary Results, 1832 - 1885, p. 583.

[263] Agatha Ramm (ed.), The Political Correspondence of Mr Gladstone and Lord Granville, 1876 - 1886 (2 vols., Oxford, 1962), vol. i, p. 116, Gladstone to Granville dated March 26, 1880.

her example.[264]

Rosebery's final allusion is striking. After Trafalgar, Pitt remarked, "Let us hope that England, having saved herself by her energy, may save Europe by her example."[265] Thus, Rosebery tried to link Midlothian and Gladstone with Trafalgar and Nelson in the public imagination. Rosebery recognised what had become a *fait accompli*: Midlothian proved that Gladstone and Gladstone alone could lead the Liberal Party and consequently the nation. As a young man reminisced, Rosebery made a lasting impression on an audience,

> After the declaration of the return of Gladstone, we rushed down to the house where he was staying with the Earl of Rosebery. I remember the opening words of the Earl from the balcony as distinctly as the words of my first lesson at school, "the election is over and I am unmuzzled." The allusion is to the fact that peers were not supposed to take part in the election of commoners.[266]

Apart from its importance to Gladstone and Rosebery, Midlothian was pivotal in the political history of Britain. It was the first modern British election.[267] Manipulation of the media, canvassing, electioneering and two extensive speaking tours all contributed to Gladstone's victory. These exciting months were unforgettable for Rosebery,

> We remember that we asked in a moment of supreme crisis a statesman who had already been Prime Minister, and who was verging on those years which invite and indeed demand repose to come and to fight the most arduous contest in Great Britain, and he came without a reservation as regards himself, and after a fight in which I

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[264] The Scotsman, April 6, 1880, p. 5.

[265] Thomas Babington Macaulay, "William Pitt," in Miscellaneous Writings and Speeches of Lord Macaulay (London, 1873), p. 429. These are the last recorded words spoken by Pitt in public.

[266] James Dick MSS, "An Account of the Dick Family," Edinburgh University Library, Gen. 1941. This reminiscence was written at Durban, South Africa in 1924.

[267] See Rhodes James, pp. 94 - 104 and Brooks, "Gladstone and Midlothian."

> hardly know which most to admire - either the dauntless behaviour and courage of the candidate himself or the spontaneous and united endeavours of the Liberals of Midlothian - he gained a victory which to those who were behind the scenes and knew what was done against him, appeared little short of miraculous.[268]

To the public, Midlothian linked the Grand Old Man and the Laird of Dalmeny. Barrie noted, "During the first Midlothian campaign, Gladstone and Rosebery were the father and son of the Scottish people."[269] The election also raised issues which reverberated in the coming years, including nationalism. On April 2, 1880, Gladstone noted "The nation is a power hard to rouse, but when roused harder still and more hopeless to resist."[270] Midlothian awakened a restless nation. Expectations were raised in Scotland for improved government.

From 1869 to 1880, Rosebery rose dramatically in prominence. Rosebery, like Chamberlain(**) and Parnell(**), understood and mastered the new means of party organisation. He had a vast and growing number of allies in the Universities, the new Liberal organizations and the press. He was wealthy and was not averse to using his money to further himself and his party. His charm and abilities established his position first in Scotland and subsequently in Britain. Though Rosebery made great progress, his future was far from assured. Apart from being a peer, he had cast his political future with Gladstone, who planned to retire shortly. Nonetheless, by 1880, Rosebery was well placed to advance rapidly in government and in the estimation of the nation.

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[268] Rosebery, "Presidential Address to East and North of Scotland Liberal Association," Edinburgh, January 29, 1881, in Scottish Liberal Association MSS, vol. 1, non-paginated.

[269] J. M. Barrie, An Edinburgh 11 (Kirriemuir ed., London, 1913), p. 6. This collection of short biographies was originally published in 1889.

[270] Rhodes James, p. 105.

3. The Uncrowned King Of Scotland, 1880 - 1929

O baleful star that parches up my days [ways?],
Such as of old portended plague and death,
Sinister sign of woe and bloody days,
Casting a blight upon the world beneath
Herald of horror and of famine, throw
No more thy withering blight on my career:
Upon another life thy curse bestow,
And I my bark amid the gloom will steer
Rather the hell of darkness than the light
Will of the wisp[1] that marks my stumbling path;
Rather the cloud to guide than fire which hath
Not helped but blinded my enfeebled sight.
Glare on some happier man who may defy
Thy taint: shine where thou wilt, but pass me by.
Rosebery, To My Star, Oct 27.1880[2]

Apprenticeship 1880 - 1886

Rosebery, a writer of infrequent verse, sheds light on a darker, more unpleasant side of his character - one dominated by self-absorbtion and self-pity. In this poem, he not only pines over his tribulations, but he is willing for another to bear his curse. Yet it is ironic that this "curse" is in reality the product of Rosebery's own efforts - he was reaping the fruit of his labours. Though Rosebery's career was greatly blessed, he was often depressed, anxious and even morbid. He frequently stated his hatred of politics, but his actions were inconsistent. Despite conflict, indecision and misunderstanding, Rosebery's political capital continued to appreciate and his vistas expanded.

The euphoria of Midlothian quickly gave way to the disillusionment described above. Despite a close friendship, Rosebery and Gladstone

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[1] a. Phosphorescent light on marshy ground due to combustion of methane. b. Person of uncertain whereabouts or appearances. c. delusive hope or plan.

[2] RP, MS 10190, f. 23, Rosebery's poem, "To My Star," dated October 27, 1880.

experienced several periods of mutual incomprehension. In 1880, Rosebery thrice refused the Under-Secretaryship of the India Office, but his rationale for this refusal is not fully clear. Given his prominent role in Midlothian, Rosebery had pledged to refuse any office in a Gladstonian government as it would appear to be an act of political jobbery. Also, since February 1880, Rosebery had suffered from scarlet fever. A third factor, often stated by historians and contemporaries, is that Rosebery refused office because he was insulted at being offered a sub-Cabinet position when several political non-entities were in the Cabinet. This escapade highlights a serious problem presented by the Rosebery Papers. Determining Rosebery's real rationale for refusing office requires not only a review of the archives, but a weighing of seemingly contradictory evidence.

Edinburgh Rectorial Election and the Growth of the Rosebery Machine

Sonnet to the Right Honourable the Earl of Rosebery

Well, here at last God sends a Lord who dares
To be a Scot, and know to be a man,
And on broad breast of honour proudly wears
The bristling badge that stamps the Scottish clan
There are who live on Scottish ground ashamed
of their Scotch blood, and with light foreign wares
Tinker the lack-wit brains, politely tamed
To hold the skirt up of a type not theirs
In servile sequence. Not so this brave Lord
Hangs from his country and his kingship loose
But stands where God him planted, with bright sword
In hand like Knox, for native Scottish use,
And Renwick[3], high souled boy whose noble crime
Rang out the reign of lies, an hour before the time.[4]

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[3] James Renwick, age 26, was the last covenanter martyr executed at the Grassmarket on February 17, 1688.

[4] John Stuart Blackie (**) composed this variation of a sonnet after hearing Rosebery's Edinburgh Rectorial Address, in Messis Vita: Gleanings of Song from A Happy Life (London, 1886), p. 147.

In the summer of 1880, the Liberal students of the University of Edinburgh invited Rosebery to stand as their candidate for Lord Rector. He considered his response very carefully. After securing Gladstone's return for Midlothian, he could ill-afford to tarnish his newly won acclaim by losing a rectorial election to the Tory candidate, Sir Robert Christison.[5] Defeat would have been humiliating. Like Gladstone prior to Midlothian, Rosebery required a firm indication of probable victory.

One of Rosebery's most tireless admirers and prolific correspondents was Dr James Donaldson who urged Rosebery to accept the nomination,

> Cooper and I have come to the conclusion that you ought to stand for the Rectorship, that your chances are good and that there exists no legal impediment to your union with Edinburgh notwithstanding your connexion with Aberdeen ... There is nothing in Sir Robert [Christison] to appeal to the imagination and hearts of students. There is no man whose career and character can do it so well as yours.[6]

During the rectorial campaign, Donaldson introduced Rosebery to Charles Cooper(**), the editor of The Scotsman. Donaldson vouchsafed for Cooper, "He is a man on whom you can rely without any hesitation. He can act, write and keep silence."[7] From 1880, "Cooper became, to a great extent, Rosebery's eyes and ears in Scotland."[8] With access to a vast network of contacts and information, Cooper could confirm and inform public opinion through The Scotsman. This association was mutually beneficial though it is true that Cooper needed Rosebery more than Rosebery needed him.

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[5] Sir Robert Christison (1797 - 1882) held the chair of Medical Jurisprudence and Police (1822 - 32) and Materia Medica (1832 - 77) at the University of Edinburgh. As Principal Grant noted "no professor out of all the long list ever made so great an impression by his character on the University."

[6] RP, MS 10013, f. 4, Donaldson to Rosebery dated July 7, 1880.

[7] RP, MS 10013, f. 4, Donaldson to Rosebery dated July 7, 1880. Cooper had been joint-editor of The Scotsman since 1876 and editor-in-chief from 1880.

[8] The Glorious Privilege: The History of The Scotsman (London, 1967), p. 71.

Rosebery used the information that he received from his contacts in Scotland for his own benefit, and he passed it on (directly or indirectly) to Gladstone. Among Gladstone's secretaries, Rosebery was very close friends with Hamilton, friendly with Arthur Godley(**), and a first cousin of Henry Primrose.[9] Rosebery was also on close terms with Mary Gladstone, who acted as her father's unofficial secretary. Thus, he had many avenues to gather and disperse information. For example, Cooper told Rosebery that "The appointment of Taylor Innes[10] is universally condemned."[11] The following day, Rosebery wrote to Godley,

> If things go on as they are going you will have Scotland as well as Ireland on your hands. The news of Taylor Innes' appointment has been received with a unanimous feeling of incredulity and dismay. ... I am sorry to say a feeling is gaining ground that Scotland having served her purpose at the general election is now being completely neglected. I can say nothing to controvert that opinion. I write strongly because I feel strongly, and because blame is being unjustly thrown on me as if I had something to do with the Ministry or with Scotland ... I write to absolve my conscience and shall now only watch Scotch events without attempting to interfere.[12]

This letter is typical of Rosebery's interference. He forthrightly expresses himself as a spokesman for Scotland, but closes as if he were simply a concerned citizen. Rosebery clearly used the information at his disposal to

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[9] Sir Henry William Primrose (1846 - 1923) was the son of Bouverie Primrose and first cousin of Lord Rosebery. Sir Henry served as the Marquess of Ripon's secretary (1880 - 84) and Gladstone's private secretary (1886). He was Secretary to the Office of Works (1886 - 95), Chairman of the Board of Customs (1895 - 99), and the Board of Inland Revenue, (1899 - 1907). He was made K.C.B. in 1899 and Privy Counsellor in 1912. He suffered terribly from insomnia, and after an extended period of sleeplessness, he took his life in 1923.

[10] Alexander Taylor Innes (1833 - 1912) was a member of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution and a Scottish historian. He became an advocate in 1870 and was appointed Advocate Depute in 1881 by Gladstone. A tireless Disestablisher, Innes made many enemies (including Cooper) because of his extreme voluntarism.

[11] RP, MS 10010, f. 11, Cooper to Rosebery dated February 4, 1881.

[12] RP, MS 10077, f. 54, Rosebery to Godley [copy] dated February 5, 1881. The original is not in the British Library.

advance himself and Scotland.

Both Cooper and Donaldson became important cogs in the Rosebery machine as supporters, intriguers and correspondents. The tone of Donaldson's letters was little short of adoration, "I feel it a peculiar privilege to have the friendship of one who is noble to his inmost core and whom in all circumstances I can love with the deepest affection."[13] Cooper was flattering, but he tended to be more businesslike,

> I have been making many inquiries as to the rectorship of Edinburgh University ... Further I have quietly made many and careful inquiries among students and people who know students, and my conviction is that if you stand you will have more than a chance of election.[14]

Rosebery accepted the Liberal nomination for the Edinburgh rectorship and he relied on his vast local influence to secure victory.[15] Rosebery's circle of allies included both young and old. Donaldson wrote, "My son [James Kennedy Donaldson] is entirely at your disposal. He could write any letters for you that you wish and see any people that you don't wish to see."[16] Adopting Disraeli's technique, Rosebery urged his younger informants to inform him of any new developments.

As the poll approached, Rosebery maintained an even higher profile. On November 2, he was the Chairman at a farewell banquet for W. P. Adam who was about to take up the Governorship of Madras.[17] He had one further

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[13] RP, MS 10013, f. 15, Donaldson to Rosebery dated September 28, 1880.

[14] RP, MS 10010, f. 5, Cooper to Rosebery dated July 7, 1880.

[15] For accounts of the election see The Scotsman, November 1, 1880, p. 5, and November 2, p. 6.

[16] RP, MS 10013, f. 25, Donaldson to Rosebery dated October 13, 1880. Donaldson's son became one of Rosebery's most frequent correspondents.

[17] The Scotsman, November 3, 1880, p. 7.

opportunity to improve his prospects: his Aberdeen rectorial address. Delayed nearly two years, Rosebery agreed to speak on the day preceding the Edinburgh poll. He sent Donaldson a draft of the address for his comment. Donaldson replied, "I cannot tell you how pleased I am with the address. It has the true ring throughout as of genuine refined gold. ... I shall take the address tomorrow to Cooper."[18]

Cooper's involvement in the election was extensive. On November 4, 1880, two days before the poll, Donaldson wrote,

> I spoke to [Cooper] about the publication of the Rectorial Address on Friday afternoon [November 5th]. He has read it and thinks exceedingly highly of it & is sure that it would do good. All we want to know is the exact time when you are to deliver it and Cooper will see to it that it appears in the Evening News after the hour of delivery. I feel confident that it will do good. I like the address intensely and apart from rectorial reasons, I think that it will be a real benefit to students if they get the opportunity of reading it.[19]

This clear partisanship undermines Cooper's later claim that, "never in its career had The Scotsman been at the beck and call of statesmen or politicians."[20] As Rosebery delivered his address in Aberdeen, he was assured that it would be published that evening in Edinburgh. Crewe's assertion that the nearness of his Aberdeen address and the Edinburgh election was "by coincidence"[21] is naive and untenable.

In one of his greatest speeches, Rosebery asserted, "the history of our native country is not merely useful and interesting, but absolutely essential; and I confess that it seems to me the greatest of omissions that there is no

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[18] RP, MS 10013, f. 31, Donaldson to Rosebery dated October 28, 1880.

[19] RP, MS 10013, f. 34, Donaldson to Rosebery dated November 3, 1880.

[20] Charles A. Cooper, An Editor's Retrospect (London, 1896), p. 408.

[21] Crewe, vol. i, p. 112.

provision for teaching it."[22] There was then no provision to teach modern history, not to mention Scottish history, at any of the Scottish Universities. In contrast to modern and post-modern thought, Rosebery viewed history as a "single-minded search after truth."[23] His language was rousing and his passion was sincere, "the history of Scotland is not a cold register of dates and treaties; it stirs the blood like a trumpet."[24] Rosebery's speeches were not cold dispassionate orations; they stirred the passion and fired the imagination of his audience - in this case the young men who represented Scotland's future (and consequently the future of the Empire).

He challenged his youthful audience to make the best possible use of their talents,

> It lies with you to decide whether your career shall be a heritage of woe or a fruitful blessing and an honoured memory. Day by Day, the horizon of human possibility, which now lies so unbounded before you must contract: the time must come when, under the stroke of illness or the decay of nature, hope and health, the pride or power of life and intellect, which now seem so inseparable from your triumphant youth, will have passed away. There will then be no surer consolation, humanly speaking, than the consciousness of honest hope fulfilled, of health not abused, of life and intellect exerted in all its strength and fullness, not like water poured upon the sand, but for the raising and bettering in some degree of some portion of your fellow-men.[25]

Did Rosebery meet his own challenge or were his prodigious gifts wasted like water poured on the sand?[26] The answer to this question depends on the

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[22] Rosebery, "Aberdeen Rectorial Address," November 5, 1880, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 48.

[23] Ibid, p. 46.

[24] Ibid, pp. 47 - 8, 50.

[25] Ibid, p. 63.

[26] Vanity Fair Album,1901, portrait #734, noted, "He is a clever fellow who is often called able; but with all his cleverness, his brilliance, and his wit he reminds one of a man with ten talents who does nothing with them." This is an allusion to the parable of the talents in

standards used to judge success. By the inflated and unrealistic expectations which Rosebery cultivated, his career was a failure, but by any fair measure, he achieved much and inspired more.

Undoubtedly, Rosebery's triumphant reception and stirring speech in Aberdeen contributed to his narrow victory of 39 votes in Edinburgh. On November 8th, Cooper's leader was devoted to Rosebery's address,

> It might be said that Lord Rosebery's address to the Aberdeen students secured his election as Lord Rector of Edinburgh University; the power it displayed could not but make an impression upon the minds of the most thoughtful of the students.[27]

In The Scotsman, Rosebery's rectorial victory was reported before the results of the American Presidential election in which the Republican General Garfield defeated the Democrat General Hancock by less than 10,000 votes!

Rosebery's allies capitalised on his victory. Attending a victory dinner, Holmes Ivory(**), Secretary of the Scottish Liberal Club, reported,

> I accordingly suggested that those present should form themselves into the Rosebery Club on the basis of the Gladstone Club in Glasgow with power to add to their members. The suggestion was received with tremendous cheering. When I sat down, Donaldson got up and ably supported me.[28]

Many Rectors treated their position as a formality, but Rosebery was active

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Matthew, chapter 25, verses 14 - 30.

[27] The Scotsman, November 8, 1880, p. 4.

[28] RP, MS 10037, f. 14, Ivory to Rosebery dated December 5, 1880. The remit of the club was "to see that the students are provided with a candidate and in proper working trim for their rectorial contests, but it is also to take a great deal of interest in the parliamentary representation of the University" [RP, MS 10076, f. 199, James Kennedy Donaldson to Rosebery dated December 19, 1880].

in the University and frequently chaired the meetings of the University Court. As Rector of Aberdeen he presided over 2 out of the 11 meetings of the University Court,[29] while at Edinburgh he was present at 7 of the 14 meetings.[30] His involvement in University affairs and his growing patronage solidified his power on the local and national level.

On November 4, 1882, he delivered his rectorial address to the University of Edinburgh on, 'The Patriotism of the Scot.' In an inspiring speech, he acknowledged "that there is no word so prostituted as patriotism," but his patriotism was neither narrow nor divisive. He spoke about Scotland because he knew it best. He omitted England because the national sentiment "less fully developed" there[!], avoided Ireland because the "ground is so dangerous" and ignored Wales completely.[31] Scotland unlike Ireland could exert her nationalism and patriotism while remaining fully loyal to Great Britain and the Empire. Rosebery believed that Scottish Nationalism in the late 19th century was not threatening, but rather it was subject to "misapplication [or] ... a serious and very natural decay." He was largely correct.

Rosebery believed that Scottish patriotism complemented the larger patriotism which he embraced: Imperialism.

> A great empire like the British should be a sheet knit at the four corners, containing all manner of men,[32] fitted for their separate climates and work and spheres of action, but honouring the common

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[29] Peter J. Anderson (ed.), Rectorial Addresses Delivered in the Universities of Aberdeen (Aberdeen, 1902), p. 380.

[30] Edinburgh University MSS, University Court Minute Book, vol. iii.

[31] Rosebery, "Edinburgh Rectorial Address," November 4, 1882, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, pp. 110, 111.

[32] Allusion to Acts, Chapter 10, verses 9 - 12.

vessel which contains them.[33]

Imperialism did not imply or require uniformity and patriotism did not imperil the Imperial bond. Rosebery believed that diversity within the Empire was a strength not a weakness. Expanding on this theme, he stated, "it is good for the Empire that we should preserve our nationality, and that as regards ourselves, we should find a use for it."[34] Rosebery's patriotism was both practical and sentimental. Each Scot had a stake in raising and maintaining the reputation of Scotland and the Empire.

Rosebery concluded his address by focusing on the "historical Conservatism of the Scottish people" which "has preserved Scottish nationality, and it is that which will preserve those institutions in Scotland which are worth preserving."[35] Conservatism is a key in understanding Rosebery. Throughout his career, he sought to maintain the fundamental structures of government and society by timely reform.

Rosebery's legacy to Scotland is not merely a collection of well delivered addresses. Scotland owes him a great debt. Rosebery urged his countrymen to reconstitute the old literary clubs and publishing societies which were so popular in the 18th century. He noted that "in the strict nationalistic sense" it is a great matter to preserve Scotland's "archives beyond the touch of time, and enrich the general treasure of human erudition."[36] In 1886, Rosebery founded the Scottish History Society which continues to publish documents from Scotland's past. In his 43 years as President of the Society, Rosebery urged the conservation of domestic as well as political

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[33] Rosebery, "Edinburgh Rectorial Address," in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, pp. 112 - 3.

[34] Ibid, p. 121.

[35] Ibid, p. 126.

[36] Ibid, p. 129.

documents to give a well-rounded picture of the age. This is typical of Rosebery's nationalism, because central to his nationalism is a recognition (often idealised and romanticised) of the past, and consequently preserving historical records insured the perpetuation of a distinct Scottish identity. The motto of the Scottish History Society, *Colligite Fragmenta ne Pereant* (gather the fragments lest they perish) encapsulates Rosebery's desire to preserve Scotland's heritage for generations to come and was but one manifestation of his nationalism. Later, Rosebery was also instrumental in establishing and endowing the National Library of Scotland which now contains his manuscript collection as well as significant collections of his rare books and pamphlets.[37] On a practical as well as a sentimental level, Rosebery sought to advance the cause of his beloved Scotland.

Scottish Affairs

In the early 1880s, Rosebery's prominence grew in good part due to the activity of his allies. The chief members of Rosebery's machine were diverse but each had local or national power. These men may have been forgotten by history, but they were crucial in forwarding Rosebery's position in Scotland. Cooper frequently used his position as leader writer and editor of The Scotsman to tout Rosebery's genius. Donaldson asserted his practical value in Scotland,

> I have come into communication some how or other with the Dundee, Stirling, Alloa, Perthshire, Aberdeen and some of the small local newspapers in connection with the Scotch Minister question and I have easy access to the Inverness papers.[38]

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[37] In 1911, after opening the Mitchell Library in Glasgow, Rosebery noted with regret the absence of a National Library for Scotland. In 1925, Rosebery endowed the Manuscripts Department with a donation of £5,000. Patrick Caddell and Ann Matheson (eds.), For the Encouragement of Learning: Scotland's National Library, 1689 - 1989 (Edinburgh, 1989), pp. 139, 252.

[38] RP, MS 10013, f. 77, Donaldson to Rosebery dated June 2, 1881.

Ronald Munro-Ferguson(**) was one of Rosebery's closest friends and most ardent supporters giving Rosebery one of his few contacts with the Highlands. Munro-Ferguson placed himself at Rosebery's disposal and was known for his dedication "travelling third class or walking wherever he goes to keep down his expenses."[39] He remarked, "I'm really worn out by answering questions about you."[40]

Another significant and devoted member of the Rosebery machine was James Patten(**) [later MacDougall], a leader in the Scottish Liberal Association (SLA), who tirelessly gathered information for Rosebery. Patten kept Rosebery abreast of Edinburgh and Scottish politics. J. J. Reid's assistance has already been noted with regard to Midlothian. Holmes Ivory, Gladstone's agent in Midlothian, was doubly valuable: he had an extensive knowledge of the constituency and a direct link to Gladstone. Ivory was forthright and he was not reluctant to express concern over Rosebery's behaviour.[41] Most members of the Rosebery machine were neither significant nor remarkable; their status was derived or enhanced from their connection to Rosebery. Yet, these men were far from cyphers. They were well-known and respected locally. Men like Ralph Richardson(**) of the Midlothian Liberal Association or Reid were solid 'nuts & bolts' organisers who received little recognition but served a great purpose. Through his informants, Rosebery maintained a close contact with Scottish politics and kept his fingers in many pies.

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[39] RP, MS 10042, f. 194, Patten to Rosebery dated September 22, 1885.

[40] RP, MS 10017, f. 51, Ferguson to Rosebery dated March 10, 1887.

[41] When Rosebery refused to seek reelection to the Edinburgh Rectorship in 1883, Ivory wrote, "We thought you would like the compliment of being asked to stand a second time - Mr Gladstone is the only rector the students have returned a second time running. It would be a strong recognition of the exceptional work you have done for Scotland. Your position is now become so very strong & your work is so universally recognised that it makes the present recognition of less importance & your duties are now so important that one can very well see how you may think the thing more bother than it is worth." RP, MS 10037, f. 81, Ivory to Rosebery dated February 14, 1883.

In addition to his Scottish informants, Rosebery cultivated friendships and received frequent correspondence from many influential journalists. In addition to Cooper, Rosebery's allies and contacts included W. T. Stead[42] of the Pall Mall Gazette and G. E. Buckle[43] of The Times. His connection with the press was one factor behind his appointment as Foreign Secretary in 1886.[44]

Rosebery remained closely connected with the party apparatus in Scotland which prepared him for the larger British political arena. His knowledge of the working of the party on all levels was extensive. Rhodes James' assertion that "like Gladstone, [Rosebery] preferred not to know what was going on in the murky regions of the party organisation and did not care very much"[45] does not withstand a close scrutiny of the Rosebery Papers which are replete with detailed political intelligence.

In August 1881, at Gladstone's invitation, Rosebery entered government for the first time as the Under-Secretary of State for the Home Office. Rosebery was deferential at least for a time. His immediate boss was Harcourt(**), with whom he enjoyed cordial relations. His appointment was hailed in Scotland as glad tidings of good news to come, but this appointment soon proved unsatisfactory. As a peer, Rosebery was limited because the majority of Scottish matters were debated in the Commons. Also, Irish

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[42] William Thomas Stead (1849 - 1912 [on the Titanic]) was the assistant editor (1880 - 83) and editor (1883 - 90) of the Pall Mall Gazette. He founded the Review of Reviews in 1890 and was one of the most influential journalists of his age.

[43] George Earle Buckle (1854 - 1935) was the assistant editor (1880 - 84) and editor (1884 - 1912) of The Times. He completed the official Life of Disraeli which was commenced by W. F. Monypenny. He edited the 2nd and 3rd series of Queen Victoria's letters (1862 - 1901). He was a close friend of Rosebery but The Times was relentless in its criticisms of Rosebery's short-lived administration.

[44] Granville remarked to Rosebery, "Your hold of the press and your friendship with Bismarck will help you much in dealing with the real difficulty for us at present, the Egyptian question." RP, MS 10085, f. 47, Granville to Rosebery dated February 3, 1886.

[45] Rhodes James, p. 380.

obstruction further impaired a woefully overburdened Parliament. Scottish hopes for increased legislation languished and Rosebery remained a junior minister. Rosebery's relationship with Gladstone became strained and almost was severed through conflicts and misunderstandings which are detailed in Chapter 5. Matthew suggests that, "as Gladstone's frequent host, Rosebery gained a familiarity which he expected to see reflected in a rapid rise to the Cabinet."[46]

However, his apprenticeship was not without success. Scottish legislation did receive more attention due to Rosebery's exertions, and plans were afoot to restore the Secretaryship for Scotland and place Rosebery in the Cabinet. Also, Rosebery's tenure in office blunts some later criticisms. Gardiner asserted, "Lord Rosebery never learned to obey. He served no apprenticeship to life and the inconstancy of the brilliant amateur is over all he does."[47] Winston Churchill attributed Rosebery's political failures to his refusal to "go through the laborious, vexatious, and at times humiliating process necessary under modern conditions to bring about these great ends. He would not stoop; he did not conquer."[48] There is truth in these statements, but they are gross over-simplifications. As Under-Secretary and later as Chairman of the London County Council, Rosebery struggled and persevered, but these periods of exertion tended to be isolated and limited.

World Tours and Imperial Federation

Rosebery lived long and travelled widely. In the 1870s, he visited North America, while in the 1880s, he explored the Empire. After his long

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[46] H. C. G. Matthew and Michael R. D. Foot (eds.), The Gladstone Diaries with Cabinet Minutes and Prime Ministerial Correspondence (14 vols., Oxford, 1968 - 94), vol. x, p. clxxiv. Hereafter referred to as The Gladstone Diaries.

[47] A. G. Gardiner, Prophets, Priests and Kings (London, 1908), p. 280.

[48] Winston S. Churchill, Great Contemporaries (London, 1937), p. 6.

wrangle with Gladstone in 1882 - 3, Rosebery embarked on a world tour.[49] His Imperialism grew and matured and so too did his interest in local or self-government. He delivered several addresses in Australia,[50] where there was growing support for a system of federation.[51] The Federation of Australia represented on a small scale what was possible throughout the Empire. Power and authority could be devolved - both from mother country to colony and from central government to local or regional bodies. Addressing the New South Wales Parliament, Rosebery dwelt on the lessons which Britain could learn from the Colonies on the extent of self-government.[52] At Melbourne, he reflected on his experiences in the Home Office and admitted, "We are endeavouring in Great Britain to recover our lost local government. I hope that you in the colonies will never make commit a mistake as to forfeit that local government."[53]

Rosebery was convinced of the greatness of the Empire and the awesome task of preserving it. In Melbourne, he remarked

> There is an old tradition - I don't know if it remains good - that in the British Royal dockyards, every rope that is manufactured, from the largest cable to the smallest twine, has a single red thread through it which pervades the whole strand, and which, if unpacked, destroys the whole rope. That was a sign of the Royal production of those ropes. Although I distrust metaphors, I believe that that metaphor holds good to some extent of the British Empire. It is held together by this single red line, and that red line is the communion of races. When I say that,

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[49] The Roseberys left Liverpool on September 1, 1883 and returned to London on March 3, 1884. They visited New York, Pittsburgh, Chicago, San Francisco, Hawaii, New Zealand, Australia, Tasmania, Ceylon, Aden, Suez, Marseilles and Paris. See Crewe, vol. i, pp. 175 - 94.

[50] His Australian tour included a visit to Tasmania where a small town was named in his honour. In 1897, gold was discovered in Rosebery and the mine was named, Primrose.

[51] Australia was eventually federated in 1901.

[52] Rosebery, "Speech to the New South Wales Parliament," December 10, 1883, in Rosebery, Australian Speeches 1883 - 84 (Privately Printed, 1884), pp. 22 - 23.

[53] Rosebery, "Speech at Melbourne," January 9, 1884, in Australian Speeches, p. 40.

> I mean to imply the community of memories, of work, of object, and of aim which is implied by the communion of races. I have always hoped that that communion of races might exist as long as my life lasted, but since my visit to Australia, it will be a passion with me to endeavour to preserve that Union - and to serve this country, of which I can never have any but the happiest and most delightful memories.[54]

Here were the central elements of his Imperialism (which will be discussed in Chapter 7) - a key to understanding his political career.

Returning to Britain, Rosebery was a different man. In December 1884, he remarked, "I can conscientiously say that no six months of my life have given me equal instruction or profit."[55] Raymond noted,

> Before his visit to Australia, Lord Rosebery might be described as a Gladstonian with somewhat rebellious tendencies; full of pious regard for his illustrious chief, but a little impatient with the Gladstonian absorbtion in merely political reform, a little irritated by the typically Liberal attitude to the outer English world. After his visit to Australia we find him, except on the personal side, much less of a Gladstonian, perhaps something less of a Liberal, very decidedly more of an Imperialist.[56]

This change was seen when Rosebery received the freedom of Dundee in April 1884,

> I can hardly make out that I am in Scotland or in Australia, or whether I have ever left Scotland or been in Australia at all. Mr Chairman, I do not think these sentiments conflict at all with the feeling of affection I may have for Australia, nor does it conflict with any feeling of affection I may have for Scotland. If I may say so, it seems to me that the two strengthen each other; just as when a man has two friends whom he is very fond of and wishes to make the two better

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[54] Rosebery, "Speech at Melbourne," January 9, 1884, in Australian Speeches, p. 42.

[55] J. A. Hammerton, Lord Rosebery, Imperialist (London, 1901), p. 89.

[56] Raymond, p. 71.

> acquainted and better friends to each other.[57]

Properly managed, Rosebery contended that the Empire increased the prosperity of each component nation beyond what could be achieved separately. Rosebery continually linked local patriotism with Imperialism.

Two years later, Rosebery again used his freedom from office to explore the colonies. On October 28, 1886, he, his wife and Munro-Ferguson embarked on an 11 week tour of India and Egypt. In India, he visited Goa, "where he was able to contrast his impressions of the teeming marts of modern India with the dead civilisation of a great colonising power of a former day [i.e. Portugal]."[58] Assessing his tour, Crewe noted,

> Altogether the tour was a brilliant success. But Rosebery's record of it does not leave quite the same impression of an awakened soul as does that of his Australian journey. Many Englishmen, when they visit India, feel that for the first time they are learning what the British Empire is. That consciousness was roused in Rosebery by the spectacle of the British race creating a new world out of emptiness.[59]

These world tours were pivotal events in his personal and political life. Rosebery's interests in the Empire and his desire for increased local government found a natural outlet in the Imperial Federation League which was founded in 1884 by William E. Forster.[60] However according to Miller, the ideological origin of the League dated from Forster's Inaugural Address

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[57] Rosebery, "Speech at Dundee," April 15, 1884, in Scotsman, April 16, p. 9.

[58] Hammerton, Lord Rosebery, Imperialist, p. 108.

[59] Crewe, vol. i, p. 292. Rosebery's record of this journey is not included in the Rosebery Papers.

[60] On July 29, 1884, the Imperial Federation League - a non-party organisation - was constituted. Forster was its first president. Thomas Wemyss Reid, Life of the Right Honourable William Edward Forster (2 vols., London, 1888), vol. ii, p. 504. Forster explained and defended the new League in the following articles, "Imperial Federation," in The Nineteenth Century, vol. xvii, February, 1885, and "A Few More Words on Imperial Federation," in The Nineteenth Century, vol. xvii, March, 1885.

to the 1875/76 session of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution in which he spoke on "Our Colonial Empire."[61] Rosebery was not present at this address but he surely read the full account in The Scotsman.[62]

In its first meeting in 1884, Forster, W. H. Smith, and Rosebery inaugurated this new non-party League.[63] Smith moved the first resolution which Rosebery seconded,

> That the political relations between Great Britain and Her Colonies must inevitably lead to ultimate Federation or disintegration. That in order to avert the latter and to secure the permanent unity of the Empire, some form of Federation is indispensable.[64]

Rosebery realised the difficulties inherent in such a programme which required a dramatic reform of the constitution, but he confidently asserted,

> I believe we have now put our hand to the plough, and are not likely to look back till we have some tangible result and I view this as the inauguration of a crusade of absolutely vital importance to the future of this country.[65]

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[61] W. Addis Miller, The Philosophical: A Short History of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution and its Famous Members and Lectures, 1846 - 1948 (Edinburgh, 1949), p. 29.

[62] In 1875, Forster asserted, "May not we and our colonists together by the exercise of some mutual forbearance, by willingness to incur some mutual sacrifice, hope to transform our colonial empire into a federation of peaceful, industrious law abiding commonwealths - so that in due time our British brotherhood may prove to the world as no nation has ever proved before, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity [Psalm 133, verse 1]," in "Inaugural Address to the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution," November 5, 1875, in The Scotsman, November 6, pp. 7 - 8.

[63] The composition of the league became almost exclusively Conservative. In 1888, of the 83 MPs connected with the Imperial Federation League, only 6 were Liberal. H. C. G. Matthew, The Liberal Imperialists: The Ideas and Politics of a post-Gladstonian Elite (Oxford, 1973), p. 163.

[64] Imperial Federation League, Report of the Conference Held, July 29, 1884 at the Westminster Palace Hotel (London, 1884), p. 30.

[65] Rosebery, "Speech at the Opening of the Imperial Federation League," London, July 29, 1884 in Imperial Federation League, Report of the Conference Held, July 29, 1884 (London, 1884), p. 36.

Despite the challenges, Rosebery, one of the few prominent Liberals in the league stood to reap great benefits. Lawley advised Rosebery,

> What I am eager to impress upon you is take up the Federation of the empire & of the English speaking race scheme & 'grapple it to thy soul with hoops of steel.' ... You know America and Australia better than any living English statesman & having the inside track why not make use of it. ... Do go in and 'dish the Tories' & your own colleagues by making Federation your own.[66]

The oblique reference to Disraeli, who tried to 'dish the Whigs,' was attractive and Rosebery endeavoured to make federation his own. Later in 1885, after Gladstone announced his acceptance of Irish Home Rule, Rosebery wrote to Brett explaining how Imperial Federation held the true key to solving the Irish Question,

> I cannot understand people preferring separation to Home Rule. I detest separation, and feel that nothing could make me agree to it. Home Rule, however, is a necessity both for us and the Irish. They will have it within two years at the latest, Scotland will follow and then England. When that is accomplished Imperial Federation will cease to be a dream. To many of us it is not a dream now, but to no one will it be a dream then.[67]

Rosebery admits that a successful conclusion to the Irish Question was a necessary prelude to considering any scheme for Imperial Federation.

After Forster's death in 1886, Rosebery became the second president of the League. On July 6, 1887, Rosebery delivered a speech which addressed the politics, economics and defence of the Empire. On October 11, 1888, speaking at Leeds, Rosebery gave full rein to his emotions,

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[66] RP, MS 10083, f. 119, Lawley to Rosebery dated July 8, 1885.

[67] Rosebery to Brett dated December 23, 1885 in Crewe, vol. i, p. 279.

> For my part if you will forgive me this little bit of egotism, I can say from the bottom of my heart that [Imperial Federation] is the dominant passion of my public life. Ever since I traversed those great regions which own the sway of the British Crown outside these islands, I have felt that it was a cause which merited all the enthusiasm and energy that men could give to it. It is a cause for which anyone might be content to live; it is a cause for which if need be, anyone might be content to die.[68]

On October 31, 1888, he spoke in Edinburgh for the League to inform and rally public opinion which he saw to be the best way to advance the prospects of Imperial Federation. Rosebery defined the federation[69] and urged his fellow Scots to raise their voice in support of this great endeavour because,

> If we can make the voice of Scotland heard in this matter with unmistakeable sound, you do much to advance the completion of our scheme. For the voice of Scotland is heard not merely within our own limits ... It sounds with a trumpet note through all those colonial commonwealths in which her scattered sons have borne so conspicuous and so supreme a part.[70]

Imperial Federation, like Home Rule All Round, secured a following for a season, but it fell down at a common hurdle: the Irish Question. The failure of Irish Home Rule effectively signalled the failure of any larger scheme of Imperial Federation.

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[68] Rosebery, Address on Foreign and Colonial Policy to the Leeds Chamber of Commerce (On October 11, 1888) (London, [1888]), the concluding paragraph.

[69] "The federation we aim at is the closest possible union of the various self-governing states ruled by the British crown, of British subjects all over the world - the closest union in sympathy, in external action and in defence." Speech of the Earl of Rosebery, President of the Imperial Federation League, The Music Hall, Edinburgh October 31, 1888 (London, 1888), p. 4.

[70] Speech of the Earl of Rosebery, The Music Hall, Edinburgh October 31, 1888, p. 10.

In 1889, Rosebery kept Federation before the public.[71] In light of his attempts to reform the Lords, he realised, "There is the extreme slowness with which public opinion moves in England towards any organic change."[72] In 1890, Hannah's death removed Rosebery from actively participating in the League - effectively silencing an important voice of moderation and compromise. After returning to the Foreign Office in 1892, he resigned from the League which collapsed in 1893 due to internal dissension.[73] Political divergences over issues such as Imperial trade ultimately led to the demise of the League.[74]

Reform of the House of Lords

Returning from his first colonial tour in 1884, Rosebery again tried to reform the House of Lords. His Imperial agenda, as well as the entire Liberal programme was ultimately dependent upon this reform. It is surprising that few Liberals attempted to reform the Lords, with its hostile and intractable majority of Conservative peers. On June 20, 1884, Rosebery requested their Lordships to appoint a Select Committee "to consider the best means of promoting the efficiency of this house." Concluding a congenial speech, Rosebery quoted Burke, "We have a great hereditary peerage here, those who have their own honour, and the honour of their ancestors, and of their posterity to guard."[75] Rosebery's motion was defeated. Though his words may have been inoffensive, Rosebery's manner of speaking was irritating. He

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[71] J. E. Tyler noted in The Struggle for Imperial Unity (London, 1938), p. 183, "During the remainder of 1889, Rosebery made determined efforts to preserve the unity of the League on a basis of compromise."

[72] Rosebery, "Speech at meeting of the Imperial Federation League," November 15, 1889, in The Times, November 16, p. 6.

[73] Tyler, The Struggle for Imperial Unity, pp. 187 - 8.

[74] Seymour Ching-Yuan Cheng, Schemes for the Federation of the British Empire (New York, 1931), pp. 38 - 42.

[75] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 289, cols. 937, 957, June 20, 1884.

tended to preach and "in the House of Lords he adopted rather the tone of a very consciously sane chaplain addressing the inmates of a home for imbeciles."[76]

A few days later on July 8, 1884, Rosebery delivered one of his greatest speeches in support of the Third Reform Bill, but this time his tone was more menacing. He warned his fellow peers that "you can not prevent this bill from passing," and concluded, by appealing to "the interests of your order, of your authority, and of your party, to pause before you pass a resolution which may strike a fatal blow at their existence."[77] This speech helped restore his close relationship with Gladstone. Gladstone sent Rosebery this appreciation,

> What I admired most was your strong practical grasp of the vital question as to redistribution, and the whole closing appeal to the House for the House's sake, which could not be surpassed I think either in skill or in elevation. ... [p.s.] What you said of 'my Conservative base' was true though they may have laughed.[78]

Hamilton noted Gladstone's reaction in his diary, "Rosebery made the speech of the debate, and Mr G is greatly pleased by it. It has sent him up greatly in Mr G's estimation; and Mr G has written to R accordingly."[79]

Undeterred, the Lords asserted their prerogative without concern for the consequences. The Reform Bill was rejected and a constitutional crisis

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[76] Raymond, p. 33.

[77] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 290, cols. 418, 423 - 4, July 8, 1884.

[78] RP, MS 10023, f. 17, Gladstone to Rosebery dated July 9, 1884. On July 8, Rosebery had observed in the Lords [Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 290, col. 412], "There is no one who has the privilege and honour of Mr Gladstone's acquaintance who does not know the essentially conservative basis on which Mr Gladstone's political opinions rest! - [laughter] - noble Lords may laugh; but perhaps they have not had the same opportunities of knowing that I have."

[79] Bahlman (ed.), Hamilton's Diary, 1880 - 1885, vol. ii, p. 650, entry dated July 9, 1884.

ensued. The Government responded decisively. Parliament was prorogued immediately to reconvene for the express purpose of passing the Reform Bill. All other Government measures, including the Secretary for Scotland Bill, were abandoned. By torpedoing one measure, the Lords succeeded in blocking the Liberals' entire legislative agenda. The bill was passed and the crisis subsided, but the House of Lords remained unaltered. Rosebery continued to alert their Lordships to their impending doom, but his repeated warnings went unheeded.[80]

Cabinet Office

After Rosebery's great speech, Gladstone, Granville and Harcourt tried to find him a position in the Cabinet. Rosebery's Rothschild connection and his opposition to the government's Egyptian policy caused him to remain aloof. Only the crisis caused by Gordon's death in Khartoum induced Rosebery to put aside his reservations. On February 11, 1885, Rosebery entered the Cabinet as Lord Privy Seal and First Commissioner of Works. He jumped on a sinking ship. Johnson, his former Eton tutor, sent him, "a kind wish that you may escape flatterers and toadies, Scottish, colonial or others, and will never forget the great example of political dignity, Mr Pitt."[81] Rosebery learned from both Pitts. Like the younger Pitt, he had refused subordinate office and "like Chatham, though ready and proud to serve on a great occasion, he was always inclined to fall back into majestic loneliness again."[82]

At this time, significant rifts were evident in the Liberal Party. In the

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[80] Rosebery spoke again in the Lords on March 19, 1888 [Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 323, cols. 1548 - 76] and his reception was equally unpromising. His proposed Select Committee was rejected (50 - 97).

[81] Francis Warre Cornish (ed.), Extracts from the Letters and Journals of William Cory (Oxford, 1897), p. 511, dated February 12, 1885.

[82] Charles Mallet, "Lord Rosebery," Contemporary Review, vol. cxxxvi, July, 1929, p. 25.

1885 General Election, Chamberlain's 'Unauthorized Programme' highlighted this disunity. Gladstone was not oblivious to these strains. On September 9, he wrote to Granville,

> The problem for me is to make if possible a statement which will hold through the Election, and not go into conflict with either the right wing of the party for whom Hartington has spoken, or the left wing, for whom Chamberlain I suppose spoke last night ... [Chamberlain's] socialism repels me. Someday mischief will come. The question is when.[83]

From December 1885 to April 1886, the party was rife with intrigue.[84] Rosebery was intimate with the Gladstone family, close friends with Harcourt, Hartington and Morley(**). But, of all the major players, Rosebery cast his lot most firmly with the Grand Old Man.[85] He was personally loyal to Gladstone rather than a devout adherent of Irish Home Rule. This loyalty was not completely disinterested. Dilke's(**) divorce scandal and the desertion of Hartington and Chamberlain put Rosebery in an excellent position for a prime Cabinet post and he now seemed to be a likely successor to Gladstone.

From 1879 to 1885, Rosebery's talents and the peculiar order of events facilitated his rise to prominence. He built and consolidated a network of contacts which kept him informed and well placed for advancement. Commencing his career as an advocate for Scotland, his interests expanded

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[83] Agatha Ramm (ed.), The Political Correspondence of Mr Gladstone and Lord Granville, 1876 - 1886 (2 vols., Oxford, 1962), vol. ii, pp. 392 - 3.

[84] On December 17, 1885, in what became known as the 'Hawarden Kite,' Herbert Gladstone leaked his father's ideas on Home Rule to the press. In April 1886, Chamberlain and Trevelyan resigned their Cabinet posts, days before Gladstone introduced his first Home Rule Bill.

[85] A. B. Cooke and John Vincent asserted in The Governing Passion (Brighton, 1974), p. 131, "Rosebery performed for Gladstone the function, later taken over by Morley, of putting forward clear ideas on policy while at the same time giving Gladstone unqualified support and approval."

as he surveyed the Empire. Crewe's observation that, "At the dawn of the new year [1886], Rosebery through no conscious effort beyond increased speech-making and by the aid of no dramatic incident had become in a real sense a central figure in the Liberal party"[86] requires revision in the light of his efforts to place himself at the fore of the Liberal Party.

Denouement 1886 - 1896

> In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants and the other is getting it. The last is much the worst; the last is a real tragedy.
> Mr Dumby in Oscar Wilde, Lady Windermere's Fan, Act III (1892)

After Gladstone's 'conversion'[87] to Home Rule, the Liberal party, shorn of its Radical and Whiggish wings, was leaner but possibly more intractable. The most decimated segment of the party was the aristocracy. In Scotland (as throughout Britain), most prominent Whig peers cast their lot with the Liberal Unionists. Thus the path to power was cleared. Despite his youth and inexperience, Rosebery became the logical choice for the Foreign Office.

Foreign Affairs

> It cannot be doubted that Pitt could learn from his father that a foreign policy required firmness and purpose; that as in other things, vacillation was the one unpardonable sin; but that the arm of this

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[86] Crewe, vol. i, p. 256.

[87] In his Reminiscences (2 vols., London, 1899), vol. ii, pp. 456 - 7, Justin MacCarthy asserted that the view, "that Gladstone had made a rapid and even a sudden conversion to the principle of Home Rule for Ireland is utterly without foundation. ... I know of my own knowledge that so long ago as the early months of 1879 Gladstone was studying the question of Home Rule with a wish to be satisfied on two main points: first whether Home Rule was really desired by the great majority of the Irish people, and next whether a scheme of Home Rule could be constructed which could satisfy the claims of Ireland without imperiling the safety and the stability of the Empire. I had many conversations with Mr Gladstone on these subjects during the years that followed, and I saw that his convictions were slowly but steadily growing until they expressed themselves at last in his Home Rule measure of 1886."

> country should never be put further forward than it could be maintained.
> Rosebery, Pitt, p. 100.

Rosebery had several important qualifications for the Foreign Office - the office which proved to be best suited for him. He was well travelled. He had influential friends in the press, the diplomatic corps and among the royal families of Europe. His close friendship with Herbert Bismarck(**) was particularly valuable. As Foreign Secretary, he enjoyed a great measure of power with neither the criticism nor the accountability that came with the premiership. In 1886, Rosebery enjoyed the confidence of the sovereign, the prime minister and the public.

The circumstances of his appointment are illuminating. On February 2, 1886, Rosebery recorded the following scene,

> When [Gladstone] came into his little room, he at once offered me the Foreign Office. He said he was bound further to state that he saw no alternative for me but the Scottish Office. This he repeated. He further said that the office had the advantage or disadvantage of bringing the holder into the most constant relations with him. I said it was too big a thing for me, that at any rate I must have an hour or two to consider. He admitted that that was fair, but asked me to be as quick as possible. He promised Granville's hearty cooperation. At 3, I sent an acceptance. It is an awful scrape.[88]

Rosebery had the opportunity to head the Scottish Office but he turned it down. Gladstone used the Scottish Office as a means to coax Rosebery into accepting the Foreign Office. Rosebery needed little coaxing. The Foreign Office was a prize which he coveted - it gave him prestige and power. Martel suggests "it is impossible to understand Rosebery's career or his decision to enter politics and to leave it without understanding that appeal that foreign

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[88] Rosebery's memorandum dated February 2, 1886, quoted in Crewe, vol. i, pp. 258 - 59. This may be an extract from Rosebery's diary.

policy had for him."[89] In one sense, holding the Foreign Office, he could influence two offices because he was routinely contacted concerning all Scottish affairs. He remained the unofficial 'Minister for Scotland.' Also in terms of status, at the Foreign Office he succeeded the Prime Minister, the Marquess of Salisbury, whereas at the Scottish Office he would follow the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, a "strawberry-leafed nonentity."[90]

From the 1870s, Rosebery's focus on foreign affairs was threefold. First he stressed the danger of entangling alliances and secret treaties.[91] Secondly, he firmly maintained the sanctity of all existing treaty obligations. Thirdly, he sought continuity and consistency in foreign affairs. As Foreign Minister, Rosebery's resolve was soon tested and his theories were forced into practice. In 1886, the Russian Emperor announced his intention to cancel the 69th article of the Treaty of Berlin (1878), which designated Batoum as a free port.[92] The Concert of Europe was unconcerned, but Rosebery was immovable. He sent the following communique to St Petersburg on July 13th,

> One direct, supreme, and perpetual interest is no doubt at stake in this transaction - that of the binding force and sanctity of international engagements. Great Britain is ready at all times and in all seasons to uphold that principle, and she can not palter with it in the present instance. ... Her Majesty's Government are compelled to place on

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[89] Gordon Martel, Imperial Diplomacy: Rosebery and the Failure of Foreign Policy (Montreal, 1986), p. viii.

[90] Saki [H. H. Munro], "Ministers of Grace," in The Complete Works of Saki (London, 1989), p. 216.

[91] At the time of the Congress of Berlin, Britain entered into secret negotiations with Russia and Turkey. The details of the Russian negotiation (i.e. the Salisbury/Schouvaloff Memorandum) were leaked to the Globe. [Crewe, vol. i, pp. 103 - 105.] Rosebery delivered the following rebuke to the government, "We had called a European Congress with the view to discussing great Treaties, and standing forth on behalf of public law, we ourselves having at the same time, bound ourselves in private to consent to those stipulations which we had denounced, and which we continue to denounce." Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 242, col. 350, July 26, 1878.

[92] The Foreign Policy of Lord Rosebery, Two Chapters in Recent Politics 1886 and 1892 - 5 with extracts from Lord Rosebery's Speeches (London, 1901), p. 16.

> record their view that this proceeding of the Russian Government constitutes a violation of the Treaty of Berlin, unsanctioned by the signatory powers, that it tends to make future Conventions of the kind difficult, if not impossible; and to cast doubt on those already concluded.[93]

Russia retreated and Rosebery was victorious. Rosebery's aggressive diplomacy compelled one power to capitulate despite the indifference of the other powers. However, with Rosebery (unlike Gladstone), pragmatism could sometimes overrule principle.[94] This incident with Russia was indicative of Rosebery's style as Foreign Secretary. Sir Robert Morier,[95] the British Ambassador to St Petersburg, commented in 1886 that Rosebery "had the propensity to dictate to the foreigner, to moralize, and to claim a monopoly of being right." With regard to his successful handling of the Greece Crisis in 1886, Ramm (who was very sympathetic to Granville) gives Rosebery guarded praise,

> Rosebery stood firm. Greece capitulated. Rosebery had exacted not only decrees demobilizing army, and navy, but their communication to the powers. The blockade was then raised on 5 June 1886. It was a race course gamble that succeeded, but Rosebery with his 'Blood and Iron policy' ran a risk out of all proportion to the danger he sought to neutralize. He had however won his success.[96]

Rosebery not unnaturally enjoyed unchallenged authority. At the Foreign Office, he pursued his policies with little interference. Those who trespassed upon foreign affairs, including Gladstone, met with his sharp censure. These

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[93] Crewe, vol. i, p. 271.

[94] Compare Gladstone's response to the Bulgarian atrocities in 1876 with Rosebery's reaction to the Armenian atrocities in 1895 - 96.

[95] Sir Robert B. D. Morier (1826 - 1893) was Minister to Lisbon (1876 - 81), and Madrid (1881 - 84), and Ambassador to St Petersburg (1884 - 93). in 1886, Rosebery clashed with Morier over his refusal to implement Foreign Office directives. See Crewe, vol. i, p. 269.

[96] Agatha Ramm, Sir Robert Morier (Oxford, 1973), p. 216. In 1886, Greece threatened to attack Turkey until it was compelled to desist.

qualities were useful for a Foreign Secretary, but as later seen they proved fatal to Rosebery as Prime Minister.

Considering his tenure as Foreign Secretary, Rosebery later reflected on his greatest achievement in Office.

> If there is one thing in my life which I should like to live after me, it is that when I first went to the Foreign Office as Secretary for Foreign Affairs, I argued for and maintained the principle of continuity in Foreign administration.[97]

There is a danger in exaggerating Rosebery's importance. Martel bluntly states, "in one sense the amount of attention that has been paid to Rosebery is surprising, for he achieved very little in his political career."[98] On one level, this observation is true. However, though he may not impress current historians, Rosebery had an undisputed hold on his contemporaries and his brief stewardship of foreign affairs was considered another jewel in his crown. Matthew Arnold, a critic of Home Rule, noted, "Lord Rosebery displayed firmness and sagacity, which won for him applause on all sides."[99] More importantly, Gladstone gave Rosebery special praise,

> The youngest member of the Cabinet, of whom I will say to the Liberal Party of this country, and I say it not without reflection, for if I said it lightly I should be doing injustice no less to him than to them - in whom I say to the Liberal Party that they see the man of the future.[100]

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[97] Rosebery, "Speech at the Albert Hall," July 5, 1895, in The Times, July 6, p. 14.

[98] Martel, Imperial Diplomacy Rosebery and the Failure of Foreign Policy, p. viii.

[99] Matthew Arnold quoted in The Foreign Policy of Lord Rosebery, p. 4.

[100] Gladstone, "Speech at Manchester," June 25, 1886, in The Times, June 26, p. 8. Rosebery had previously been alerted of Gladstone's sentiments. On June 19, 1885, Ivory wrote to Rosebery [RP, MS 10037, f. 151], that Gladstone "said he had now had not a doubt in his mind that you were the man of the future & that he intended to take an opportunity of saying so in a speech before he left Scotland. He said he had always had the highest opinion of you but he had been absolutely amazed by the way in which you had conducted

Rosebery's management of foreign affairs was overshadowed and cut short by Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule. Less than 6 months after accepting the seals of the Foreign Office, Rosebery and the Liberal Party faced the prospects of a long period of opposition.

Opposition

> There is another point to which I would call your attention in regard to Burke which ... seems to me eminently creditable to him. When in 1784, he saw himself out of office for life, he did not contentedly settle down to the functions of a barren and windy opposition.[101]

Instead of pursuing a "barren and windy opposition," Rosebery was extremely active in Scottish, municipal and Imperial politics from 1886 until Lady Rosebery's death in 1890. After the defeat of the Irish Home Rule Bill, Gladstone dissolved Parliament and the Liberal Party suffered a disastrous defeat. The Conservatives carried 317 seats, the Liberal Unionists: 77, the Liberals: 191 and the Irish Nationalists: 85. Only England returned a Unionist majority: both Scotland and Wales returned Liberal majorities.[102] This prompted Gladstone to note in his papers, "England overrides Wales & Scotland. This will bring forward Scotch & Welsh questions on national grounds."[103]

After 1886, Scottish Liberalism was threatened by defections and divisions. Since 1882, Rosebery did not have any official position in Scottish

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the Foreign Office work. He repeated over and over again, 'I tell you Rosebery is the man of the future.' I said we in Scotland had long thought so."

[101] Rosebery, "Burke," Bristol, October 30, 1904, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i., p. 137.

[102] Wales returned 26 Liberals out of 34 seats, Scotland returned 43 out of 70, while England returned only 122 Liberals for 456 seats and the Universities returned only 1 Liberal for 9 seats.

[103] Gladstone Diaries, vol. xi, p. 588, memorandum by Gladstone dated July 10, 1886.

Liberalism.[104] During this hiatus, many new forces were at work in Scotland. As Kellas noted, the Third Reform Act "virtually abolished the direct political influence of the Whigs in Scotland, and they tried to retrieve their position by maintaining firm control over the Scottish Liberal Association [SLA]."[105] Instead of battling the Whigs in the SLA, Radicals established the National Liberal Federation of Scotland [NLFS] in 1885. This vehicle for radicalism was founded without the cooperation or even consent of Rosebery or Gladstone.[106]

After the defection of the Liberal Unionists, Rosebery became essential to SLA. Most of the Scottish Whig peers defected to the Liberal Unionists. Rosebery, Elgin(**) and Breadalbane(**) were notable exceptions. In the interest of the party in Scotland, Elgin entreated Rosebery,

> I confess that in my opinion everything should be done to avoid an open split. I think if we come to a rupture now, we shall lose a great many men all through the country who are valuable especially in organisation work - and it will amount to something very like a dissolution of the Scottish Liberal Association. It seems to me to be just possible to tide over the difficulty for the present if we could find a president whom both sides would accept. I think they might accept you if you would consent to be nominated. Will you think it over? The association in its present form was your work & I think you only left it when you took office.[107]

This invitation demonstrated that Rosebery was palatable both to Whigs and Radicals. This was uncommon but invaluable. On December 22, 1886, the

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[104] In the 1870s and 1880s - the period of Rosebery's first association with Scottish politics- Hanham's assertion [Elections and Party Management in the Time of Disraeli and Gladstone, p. 165.], "Scotland is a small country closely knit by kinship, the Universities, the bar, the churches and the press, and it scarcely surprising that the family atmosphere of individual Liberal associations also characterised Scottish Liberalism in general" was largely true.

[105] James G. Kellas, "The Liberal Party in Scotland, 1876 - 1895," Scottish Historical Review, vol. xliv (1965), p. 6.

[106] Hutchison, A Political History of Scotland, p. 157.

[107] RP, MS 10086, f. 91, Elgin to Rosebery dated September 6, 1886.

NLFS was amalgamated into the Scottish Liberal Association and Rosebery was named president.[108] He returned when the party's fortunes were at a low ebb.

As President of the SLA, Rosebery tried to hold back the advancing tide of Scottish Liberalism which was characterised by Radicalism and Faddism. He attempted to minimise division in the party and to encourage unity of purpose and action. Rosebery could move men and events by the sheer force of his personality, but in 1892, he no longer had the power he had in 1880. Scotland had changed and the party mechanism had altered. After the Secretary for Scotland had been restored, Rosebery had little connection to the issues which most convulsed the Liberal party: namely disestablishment and Scottish Home Rule. He could rally the party, but he could no longer mould it in his image.

1887 Glasgow Rectorial

In a previously unanalysed episode, Rosebery stood for the rectorship of the University of Glasgow - a small but significant effort to reunite the party. In March 1887, Thomas Gilmour,[109] Rosebery's private secretary, investigated Rosebery's prospects, and he sent back the following encouraging report,

> The point that I felt most anxious to determine was whether in the event of your standing you were reasonably sure of victory. As to your being the best candidate in the present circumstances I found the most absolute unanimity. The point that I discussed with Cooper & Ivory was the effect which your candidature would have on the party

[108] SLA MSS, vol. 2, p. 86, meeting December 22, 1886.

[109] Thomas Lennox Gilmour (1859 - 1936) was recommended by Charles Cooper of The Scotsman to be one of Rosebery's private secretaries in 1884 and served in this capacity until 1889. Gilmour was a journalist, Barrister, and close friend of J. M. Barrie and Robert Louis Stevenson.

in Scotland.

Taking the first point I found that voting at Glasgow is by 'nations' & that a majority in three nations is required for election. In the event of two nations going for one candidate & two for another the Lord Chancellor has a casting vote. Lord Stair is the present Chancellor & Cooper's opinion is "It would be doing Lord Stair an injustice to suppose that he would vote for any other candidate than Lord Rosebery" ... The question which the committee had to face was to find a candidate for whom both Gladstonians & Unionists could vote on grounds quite apart from the Irish question. A conference was held and it was unanimously agreed that you were the only candidate for whom both parties could work heartily. It was felt too that apart from politics your popularity in the west would materially strengthen the chances of success ... The third point to be considered opens up a subject too long for a letter, but briefly Cooper, Ivory, and Patten (to whom I mentioned the subject privately yesterday) were all strongly of the opinion that if you were reasonably secure against defeat. Your candidature would be extremely desirable both for yourself & for the party. If at this time you were chosen unanimously to represent both sections of the party - even in a Rectorial contest the effect might be much greater than the position of the electors would justify.[110]

Cooper was still working with Ivory and Patten to restore the party to its pre-1886 unity. This letter is striking in that Rosebery is seen almost as a miracle worker in the Liberal Party. Hartington at first supported Rosebery's candidature, which placed Chamberlain in an even more vulnerable and isolated position.[111] This was a time of great challenge for Liberal Unionists, Trevelyan had rejoined the Gladstonian fold and Hartington was cooperating with Rosebery.

On March 20, 1887, Rosebery accepted the joint nomination of the Gladstonians and the Unionists; Lord Lytton[112] was selected by the Conservatives. Yet, Rosebery maintained his allegiance to Gladstonian Home

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[110] RP, MS 10087, f. 64, Gilmour to Rosebery dated March 16, 1887.

[111] For more details on the abortive Roundtable Conference see Michael Hurst, Joseph Chamberlain and Liberal Reunion (London, 1967).

[112] Edward Robert Lytton, 1st Earl of Lytton (1831 - 91), was Viceroy of India (1876 - 80).

Rule. His partisan speeches ultimately shattered the tenuous link between the two Liberal Parties at Glasgow. On a personal level, Rosebery and Hartington wrangled over the Irish question. In his diary for September 24th, 1887, Rosebery noted "Hartington came by 6 train [to Mentmore]. Hammer and Tongs with him all night till 1.30 a.m. on Home Rule and politics."[113]

However, the election took on a new dimension when the following letter from Hartington appeared in The Times on November 5th,

> I am informed that as perhaps might have been expected, it has been found impossible to exclude the Irish question from the rectorial election. Lord Rosebery has in his recent speech[114] declared that there is only one question - the Irish question; and till it is settled, there can be no other question. Under these circumstances, I do not see how it is possible to prevent the election which is avowedly of a political character from being decided with reference to the opposite views on Irish policy which separate Unionist and Home Rule parties, and I can only answer your question by saying that I cannot now consistently advise the Liberal Unionists of Glasgow University to support the candidate of the Liberal Club.[115]

Emotions were running high. A few days later, The Times reported an attack on the Liberal Clubhouse at Glasgow University on November 10. The interior was completely wrecked,

> The wreckers had set to work in a methodical manner. All the chairs with one exception were Broken into small pieces, portraits of Mr Gladstone and Lord Rosebery were cut out of their frames and destroyed, and a mass of election literature was thrown into a yard below. A portrait of Mr Bright was almost the only thing in the place

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[113] Crewe, vol. i, p. 303.

[114] Rosebery spoke almost exclusively on the Irish question at Ipswich [The Times, October 6, 1887, p. 10] and Castle Douglas [The Times, October 21, p. 7].

[115] The Times, November 5, 1887, p. 6. This letter dated November 3rd was first read at a meeting of supporters of Lord Lytton.

left undamaged.[116]

The poll was announced on November 15th. Heeding Hartington's advice, Liberal Unionists voted with the Conservatives. Out of 2,010 matriculated students, 1,712 cast their votes. Rosebery secured a 22 vote majority with 867 votes to Lytton's 845, but the four 'nations' were equally divided. The chancellor, the Earl of Stair(**), had to cast the deciding vote.[117]

On November 17, Stair remained silent, and a letter dated November 16 from Rosebery to Mr Nisbet a student at Glasgow appeared in The Times,

> The result is satisfactory to me whichever may be the candidate selected by the Chancellor. The rectorship itself was not the object of my ambition. I declined to be the rectorial candidate either in Glasgow or in Edinburgh, for I had felt I had done my share of rectorial work. It was therefore with reluctance that this year, I accepted the invitation of all sections of the Liberal party among the students ratified by the published advice of those Liberal leaders from whom I differed on the Irish question. It was agreed that this was a desirable opportunity for proving that in some matters where that question was in no way concerned it was possible for all Liberals to work together as of old. I was only too glad to lend myself in any way to this combination. I need not now recall what happened on the eve of the election, all this was changed, not by your act or mine - had I then been free I should have begged that my name should be withdrawn, as the object for which I was standing had ceased to exist, and the union of the Liberals even in a matter of this sort was indefinitely postponed.[118]

Rosebery's zeal to reunite the party appears sincere. On November 17, Stair consulted the Liberal Unionist leaders and on the following day he gave his vote to Lytton. Rosebery suffered his first and only rectorial defeat.

Following this incident, Rosebery considered his friendship with

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[116] The Times, November 12, 1887, p. 9. Bright had broken with Gladstone over Home Rule.

[117] The Times, November 16, 1887, p. 6.

[118] The Times, November 17, 1887, p. 9.

Hartington to have ceased. In 1877, Rosebery secured Hartington a rectorship in Edinburgh: in 1887, Hartington denied Rosebery a similar honour in Glasgow. Three years later, their relationship was at least partially restored. Rosebery recounted his view of the incident to Hartington in a letter dated November 7, 1890,

> I have no difficulty in giving the explanation you ask for in terms so kind. It never occurred to me that a difference of opinion as to the proper course to pursue with regard to Ireland in 1886 could affect our friendship in the slightest degree. Nor did it so far as I know. But in 1887 I was asked to stand for the rectorship of Glasgow. I do not like rectorships, as they entail rectorial addresses.[119] But when I saw that you and the other unionist leaders warmly approved the idea of such a candidature, but more especially you, I thought it my duty not to avoid the opportunity of reuniting the Liberal party even in so small a matter. And so I stood. But within a day or two of the election you published another letter[120] urging your followers to vote against me. I offered to bet 100 to 1 that that letter was not genuine. But it was. It was not for me to judge whether it was fair or not. I could only be clear of one thing - that it was not the act of a friend. And as a friend - much against my will - I ceased to regard you.
>
> In spite of the letter I was elected but by the form of election the ultimate decision rested with the Chancellor - one of your principal adherents. He gave his vote to my opponent; although he was in a minority, and although he was Lord Lytton who of all living men had been most reprobated by every branch of the Liberal party. But on that day I lay no stress, nor do I wish to hold you in any degree responsible. I cared nothing for the election, and after your second letter I hated it: for the iron of that transaction entered into my soul.[121]

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[119] Rosebery is disingenuous here particularly in light of his active pursuit of the Aberdeen and Edinburgh rectorships.

[120] I have been unable to trace this first letter. It does not appear in either Rosebery's papers or in The Times. Presumably it contained Hartington's original endorsement of Rosebery's candidature.

[121] Devonshire MSS, MS 340.2256, Rosebery to Hartington dated November 7, 1890. This was in response to Hartington's letter of November 6 [RP, MS 10088, f. 251] in which he asked, "has there been any cause besides our political differences for a coolness between us which began I think on your part. I have always thought that there might have been something in my conduct about the Glasgow Rectorial Election two or three years since which you [considered] unfair or unfriendly. I have never felt quite satisfied as to the line I took on that subject, and I may have acted on bad advice."

This letter demonstrates Rosebery's sensitivity and his propensity to view political opposition as personal and mean-spirited attacks. He long remembered any slight and this defeat was especially galling. Yet, Rosebery soon turned attention to other fields of usefulness.

London County Council

In the 19th century, the government of London - the first city of the Empire - was haphazard and unorganised. In 1888, Parliament provided for the appointment of a London County Council (LCC). At the first election of councillors, Rosebery with some hesitation put himself forward as an independent candidate for the City of London. He was elected and was later chosen as the first Chairman of the LCC by a margin of 104 to 17. In his first year, he presided over 300 committee meetings and 40 public meetings.[122] It was tangible proof of his lifelong love of the metropolis.[123] The LCC gave Rosebery an outlet for his energy while in opposition, and it enabled him to see first-hand the benefits of increased local government. He was an elected public official - a rare opportunity for a peer.

In the LCC, "the rule of 'no titles' was adopted, and Lord Rosebery was uniformly addressed as 'Mr Chairman.' Unofficially he had another title, that of 'Citizen Rosebery.'"[124] For the first time, Rosebery worked closely with people from vastly different social backgrounds. The success of the LCC was due largely to his ability to unite the disparate elements of the council and for

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[122] In recognition of Rosebery's new post, Gladstone noted "I look upon the question of county councils as one of very great but as yet in a large degree undeveloped importance." RP, MS 10023, f. 264, Gladstone to Rosebery dated August 14, 1889.

[123] For further details see Crewe, vol. i, pp. 331 - 8.

[124] Raymond, p. 105.

his efforts he received wide public acclaim.[125] However, as in the Foreign Office, Rosebery "had a tendency to be a law unto himself, resentful of outside interference, and easily angered by opposition or criticism."[126] In correspondence, he referred to the LCC as "his council." Nonetheless, his tenure at the LCC represents Rosebery at his best. He gave almost his undivided attention to ensuring that this fledgling council not only survived but materially aided London and its vast population. His style may have been autocratic but his motivation was pure and his goals were admirable.

Hannah's Death

In October 1890, as Gladstone was conducting another triumphant Midlothian campaign, tragedy struck Dalmeny. Lady Rosebery was diagnosed with typhoid. After rallying, she relapsed and in the early hours of November 18, 1890, her life ebbed away; Hannah lay dead. Rosebery, now a widower with four young children, was inconsolable, and his health was precarious. He suffered serious bouts of insomnia in 1891 - 92,[127] and his inclination toward morbidity was even more pronounced.[128]

He lost his most loyal supporter. Hannah had continually pushed and

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[125] Even Tom Johnston in his stinging attack on the Scottish aristocracy [Our Scots Noble Families (Glasgow, 1909), p. 11] conceded "Lord Rosebery, of course has done good work on the L.C.C. - work which it would be foolish or churlish to mitigate or deny."

[126] Rhodes James, p. 221.

[127] In March 1892, Lady Monkswell recorded her impressions, "He looks so sad and ill, his very size and squareness and massive head impress one at once. Then directly he opens his mouth his deep rich voice, which for a good part of his speech he hardly raised, and his beautiful, refined clear pronunciation, is delightful to listen to. He is an orator, without any effort he makes one's blood run faster, and he has a delightful power of humour. He has a hundred tones in his voice, and his face, whether truly or not, expresses deep earnestness. I can hardly believe, unless he gets a great deal better, that he is anything like well enough for public life." E. C. F. Collier (ed.), A Victorian Diarist Extracts from the Journals of Mary, Lady Monkswell, 1873 - 1895 (London, 1944), p. 205.

[128] Like Queen Victoria after Albert's death, Rosebery used black-edged writing paper for the remainder of his life. He also marked the anniversary of Hannah's death in solemn seclusion. See Rhodes James, pp. 228 - 9.

prodded him to remain in the political arena. Hamilton noted,

> My belief is - and Henry Primrose shares it - that R has a genuine dislike or imagines he has of public life; that he loves seclusion; that he is not really ambitious - whatever ambition he had was buried with his poor wife.[129]

After Hannah's death, Rosebery's sensitivity and detachment grew and his behaviour became more erratic and inexplicable. The light of his life had been quenched.

Gladstone's Fourth Ministry

During Rosebery's mourning, political events moved rapidly. Parnell was named as a co-respondent in the O'Shea divorce trial, and Gladstone threatened to end the Liberal/Irish National alliance if Parnell remained leader. The Irish Party split and within a year Parnell was dead. On October 2, 1891, Gladstone adopted the progressive and multifaceted Newcastle Programme.[130] Chamberlain disparagingly commented, "It is an absurd programme, an impracticable programme, and therefore a dishonest programme. It is a programme that begins by offering everything to everybody and it will end by giving nothing to anybody."[131] In retrospect, Rosebery wrote, that the programme "was adopted when I was in retirement and I have never adhered to it. It alienated many by its contents and more perhaps by its gay ease with which it was accepted."[132] Scottish Liberal

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[129] Dudley W. R. Bahlman (ed.), The Diary of Sir Edward Walter Hamilton, 1885 - 1906 (Hull, 1993), p. 171, entry for August 15, 1892. Hereafter referred to as Bahlman (ed.), Hamilton's Diary, 1885 - 1906.

[130] The programme included Welsh Disestablishment, triennial parliaments, One Man-One Vote, Local Veto, employers' liability measures, compulsory land acquisition and improved local government.

[131] Chamberlain, "Speech at Llanybyther," October 13, 1891, in J. L. Garvin and Julian Amery, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain (6 vols., London, 1932-1969), vol. ii, p. 579.

[132] RP, MS 10131, p. 60, Rosebery to Lord Brassey [copy] dated February 7, 1896.

organizations adopted even more extreme platforms. New rifts were visible in an already fractured party.

Due to his poor health and low spirits, Rosebery planned to retire from politics after the 1892 General Election. This threat was neither idle nor contrived. To aide the party, he came out of seclusion in spring 1892 to deliver rousing partisan speeches which elicited a sharp rebuke from the Queen. After Rosebery spoke in Birmingham, she wrote her private secretary, Sir Henry Ponsonby, that she considered his speech to be,

> Radical to a degree to be almost communistic. Hitherto he always said he had nothing whatever to do with Home Rule, and only with foreign affairs; and now he is as violent as anyone. In case of the government's defeat, The Queen meant to send for him [Rosebery] first, but after this violent attack on Lord Salisbury, this attempt to stir up Ireland, it will be impossible and the G.O.M. at 82 is a very alarming lookout.[133]

This extract indicates the Queen's elevated view of her own powers, her favouritism and her increasing detachment from reality. Of course it would have been impossible for her to send for Rosebery. Yet, this incident shows who she considers to be Gladstone's successor.

Rosebery's behaviour too was difficult to reconcile with rationality. Despite his strong desire to retire, Rosebery again became Foreign Secretary. The traditional view of these events is that Rosebery, the reluctant statesman, bowed to concerted political pressure out of dedication to his country. Considerable evidence supports this assertion. On August 3, 1892, he confided to his diary, "it may be impossible for me to hold my ground but I

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[133] G. E. Buckle (ed.), The Letters of Queen Victoria (3rd ser., 3 vols., London, 1930 - 2), vol. ii, p. 120, the Queen to Ponsonby dated May 30, 1892. The speech [Rosebery, "Speech at Birmingham," May 26. 1892, in The Times, May 27, p. 10] was firmly Gladstonian: it was not Communistic.

will make the best fight I can."[134] Rosebery finally surrendered. Brett noted,

> Rosebery's final acceptance of office came about in this way. He had been pestered by everyone from the Prince of Wales downwards. He went to Mentmore - Saturday it was - with Primrose his cousin, who was once Mr G's secretary. They wrangled all the evening.
>
> On Sunday Buckle came over from Humphrey Ward's and implored him to take office. Talked for two hours. Then after he had gone he walked with P. for another two hours. On his return he found 16 pages of resumé from Buckle of all his arguments.
>
> On Monday while the dispute still continued, Arnold Morley drove up with a note from Mr G who had gone to Osborne, saying, "As I have nothing from you since our conversation on Thursday last, I shall submit your name to the Queen this afternoon." At the interview in question Rosebery had definitely refused. So it came about, and Rosebery yielded merely telegraphing to Osborne, "So be it." The dodge was Eddy Hamilton's idea and it succeeded when perhaps everything else would have failed.[135]

On August 15, Rosebery took the Foreign Office and his health underwent a marked improvement. He quickly warmed again to the office.

Rosebery was reluctant to take office, but his evident enjoyment of the Foreign Office makes some further qualification necessary. Rosebery considered that he was the best man for the Foreign Office as well as being essential to the Government. Essentially, he was pressured into accepting an office which he believed was his by right. On September 1, 1892, a fortnight after taking office, he remarked to Count Von Hatzfeldt,[136] the German Ambassador to Britain,

> Mr Gladstone was old and his dominating position in the cabinet was

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[134] Rosebery's diary entry for August 3, 1892 in Rhodes James, p. 244.

[135] Maurice V. Brett (ed.), Journals and Letters of Reginald Viscount Esher (4 vols., London, 1934 - 38), vol. i, pp. 162 - 3, journal entry dated September 7, 1892.

[136] Count Paul Von Hatzfeldt - Wildenburg (1831 - 1901) was previously Foreign Secretary in Berlin and served as German Ambassador to the Court of St. James from 1885.

> not what it was, whilst he, Lord Rosebery, could assure me without exaggeration that he was now almost indispensable to the inherently weak ministry, and was therefore much stronger than formerly.[137]

Rosebery's acceptance of office was a testament both to his own political capital and to the weakened state of the party.

One key to understanding this incident and indeed much of his later career lies in Rosebery's perceptive monograph on Pitt. Rosebery later stated that, "he regarded the whole of his ministerial career as written prophetically in his book on Pitt."[138] Rosebery recognized a tendency to which he was not immune, "after a short tenure of high office, the holder almost invariably thinks himself admirably fitted for it."[139] It is difficult to imagine that Rosebery could have allowed any one else to pilot the Foreign Office in 1892. Here again is a parallel to Chatham, who,Rosebery noted, once said, "I am sure that I can save this country, and that nobody else can."[140] From his experiences in the Foreign Office, Rosebery cultivated the image that he and he alone was the saviour of the nation.[141] This conceit formed the basis for his later addresses to the nation at times of crises.

In his second term as Foreign Minister, Rosebery came into direct conflict with Gladstone and the Cabinet. Lord Novar [Munro-Ferguson] recollected, "we did not send too much information from the FO to the other

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[137] Rhodes James, p. 255.

[138] Stead MSS, memorandum [incomplete] of meeting between Stead and Rosebery on May 21, 1894.

[139] Rosebery, Pitt, p. 230.

[140] Rosebery, Pitt, p. 53. Rosebery lifted this quote from Macaulay's, "William Pitt, Earl of Chatham" [Edinburgh Review, January, 1834] in Montague (ed.), Essays by Lord Macaulay, vol. ii, p. 40.

[141] For example, in November 1893, Rosebery's mediated the long and bitter Coal Strike. "After six hours of discussion at the Foreign Office, agreement was reached, and the strike called off; both sides were warm in their praises of Rosebery's handling of the negotiations." Rhodes James, p. 293.

side of the street and over Uganda Ld R remarked that Mr G's hair would stand on end if he knew what was going on there."[142] Brett observed, Rosebery "is absolute at the F.O. He informs his colleagues of very little. If it offends them, he retires."[143] Gladstone objected to Rosebery's foreign policy as aggressive and acquisitive referring to him in conversation as a 'Jingo.'[144] Rosebery found himself at odds with Gladstone over two issues: Uganda and the naval estimates.[145]

Uganda was a missing link in Rhodes' fabled Cape to Cairo Railroad and it was currently occupied by British troops.[146] Gladstone favoured evacuation, no doubt remembering the Gordon debacle in the Soudan. Rosebery favoured non-evacuation to check the French in Eastern Africa, to maintain British interest in the region, and to stake his claim as Foreign Minister to control foreign affairs.[147] Rosebery forthrightly asserted his power and prerogative.[148] On September 25, 1892, Rosebery wrote Gladstone,

With reference to the question of ministerial responsibility I do not

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[142] RP, MS 10195, f. 324, Lord Novar to Crewe dated March 26, 1930.

[143] Journals of Viscount Esher, vol. i, p. 163. The Foreign Secretary was privy to papers which the Cabinet including the Prime Minister never saw. Rosebery closely guarded this privilege.

[144] Horatio Gordon Hutchinson (ed.), Private Diaries of the Rt. Hon. Sir Algernon West, G.C.B. (London, 1922), pp. 230 - 1. Jingo - an aggressive chauvinist imperialist - was coined from the music hall song, "We don't want to fight/But by jingo if we do/We've got the men/We've got the ships/We've got the money too."

[145] Of course, there were secondary issues. As Foreign Secretary, Rosebery defended British interests in Siam against French encroachment, he settled the difficult issue of Pamir with Russia, and through timely intervention, he neutralised a serious attempt to compromise British rule in Egypt.

[146] For a more detailed analysis of Rosebery's African policy, see Ronald Robinson, and John Gallacher with Alice Denny, Africa and the Victorians: The Climax of Imperialism in the Dark Continent (New York, 1961), pp. 311 - 36.

[147] Rhodes James, p. 261.

[148] On November 5, 1892, Ripon wrote to Kimberley, "If [Rosebery] gets his way about Uganda, as I suppose he will, he will be very difficult to manage." Margery Perham, Lugard: The Years of Adventure, 1858 - 1898 (London, 1956), p. 335.

> doubt that the first minister shares in a special degree that of all departments. But in the popular minds a special responsibility does rest on the departmental minster. And in strictness he shares a special responsibility with the Prime Minister.[149]

In a memorandum composed in 1896 - 97, known as his 'Recorded Errors,' Gladstone recorded his critical impressions of Rosebery as Foreign Secretary,

> The fatal element in this appointment was his total and gross misconception of the relative position of the two offices we respectively held, and secondly his really outrageous assumption of power apart from both the First Minister and from the Cabinet.[150]

Caution must be exercised with such retrospective analyses but these reflections underscore the volatile nature of the Gladstone/Rosebery relationship.[151]

Uganda also exacerbated the differences which existed between Rosebery and Harcourt. Despite many years of close friendship, their friendship broke down as Harcourt meddled in foreign affairs and Rosebery interfered with Harcourt's budget. With regard to Uganda, Harcourt was unequivocal: he would "rather die a thousand deaths"[152] than have any

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[149] GP, Add MS 44289, f. 225, Rosebery to Gladstone dated September 25, 1892. This disagreement came to a head in October 1892, concerning the Egyptian Question. Eager to avoid Rosebery, who was clearly anti-French, William Henry Waddington (1826 - 1894), the French Ambassador to Britain (1883 - 93), talked to Gladstone directly. This breach of protocol incensed Rosebery and damaged his relationship with Gladstone. See Rhodes James, pp. 272 - 3 and Gladstone's own memorandum on the subject [GP, Add MS 44791, f. 44].

[150] GP, Add MS 44791, f. 43, Gladstone's memorandum dated 1896. In 1897, Gladstone added the following footnote [GP, Add MS 44790, f. 143], "My bringing him to the Foreign Office was indeed an immense advancement, but was done with a belief, not sustained by subsequent experiences, in his competency and wisdom."

[151] Rosebery once confided "to a close friend in the last weeks of his life that his only mistake - 'and a very great one' - had been to follow Gladstone." Quoted in Rhodes James, p. 271; the "friend" is unidentified. It may have been John Buchan.

[152] A. G. Gardiner, The Life of William Harcourt (2 vols., London, 1923), vol. ii, pp. 192 - 3.

responsibility for the retention of Uganda. This drama concluded in 1894 when Rosebery became Prime Minister; he quickly annexed Uganda. By that point, he and Harcourt no longer spoke to each other.

Concerning the naval estimates,[153] Rosebery again clashed with Gladstone. Rosebery demanded a strong navy that was perceived by the powers to be strong. A suspected weakness was as dangerous as an actual one, but Gladstone remained adamantly opposed to what he considered rash expenditure. On November 15, 1893, Rosebery wrote to the Queen, that he

> Is in reality more interested in this matter than any of Your Majesty's ministers, for the authority and weight of the Foreign Office suffer obvious diminution when the navy is suspected of weakness and are perhaps impaired by that suspicion at this moment.[154]

Expressing to the Queen his clear disagreements with the Prime Minister - even at her prompting - betrays a lack of loyalty to his chief. Rosebery explained his position to Gladstone in a letter dated December 18,

> Prevention is better than cure, and I firmly believe that the spontaneous expenditure of a few millions now may prevent the compulsory expenditure of many hundred millions later. ... If we are to spend the money, let us get our money's worth: and half the worth will lie in the promptitude of the announcement that we are ready to spend it.[155]

Gladstone made no reply. Rosebery's strong opposition may have sealed Gladstone's fate. Gladstone could overcome Spencer(**), but Rosebery's

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[153] Concern for the navy was brought to a head by a disastrous naval collision on June 22, 1893. An error on the part of Admiral Sir George Tryon (1832 - 93) resulted in the sinking of the Victoria and serious damage to the Camperdown.

[154] RP, MS 10065, f. 123, Rosebery to the Queen [copy] dated November 15, 1893 in response to RP, MS 10065, f. 116, Queen Victoria to Rosebery dated November 12, 1893.

[155] GP, Add MS 44290, f. 214, Rosebery to Gladstone dated December 18, 1893.

defection was a hard blow. At odds with his entire Cabinet over the estimates, Gladstone resigned, claiming poor eyesight and deafness.

Despite his youth and relative inexperience, Rosebery appeared to be the most logical successor to the Grand Old Man. Hartington and Chamberlain had defected in 1886, Harcourt was unacceptable,[156] and Spencer and Kimberley(**), if summoned, would have asked the Queen to call for Rosebery.[157] Rosebery was willing to form a government, but he confided his reservations to Hamilton, "it would be like taking a good ploughman and promoting him to the place of head gardener."[158] Rosebery's fears were realised as he went from being an acclaimed Foreign Secretary to become one of the worst premiers in the 19th century. On the eve of his elevation to the premiership, Hamilton recorded Rosebery's further unease,

> I call you to witness that I undertake the duty of forming an administration with the greatest reluctance. The Foreign Office was an ambition of mine, I admit. I consider it by far the finest post to occupy. But the Prime Ministership I have never coveted.[159]

Premiership

> What is a Prime Minister? That is a question which it would require a pamphlet to answer, but in a few sentences it may be possible to remove a few hallucinations. For the title expresses much to the British mind. To the ordinary apprehension it implies a dictator, the duration of whose power finds its only limit in the House of

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[156] Harcourt's personality was largely to blame. His colleagues "had smarted under the whip of his formidable tongue and not less formidable pen, and his uncalculating emphasis in controversy took no account of consequences." Gardiner, Life of Harcourt, vol. ii, p. 261.

[157] Rhodes James, p. 317.

[158] Rhodes James, p. 306, Rosebery to Hamilton dated January 29, 1894. This letter is not included either in the Hamilton Papers or the Rosebery Papers, so I rely solely upon Rhodes James' citation.

[159] Bahlman (ed.), Hamilton's Diary, 1885 - 1906, p. 247, conversation between Rosebery and Hamilton on March 3, 1894.

> Commons. So long as he can weather that stormful and deceptive ocean he is elsewhere supreme. But the reality is very different. ... His power is mainly personal, the power of individual influence. ... He has to deal with the Sovereign, with the Cabinet, with Parliament, and with public opinion, all of them potent factors in their various kinds and degrees. To the popular eye, however, heedless of these restrictions, he represents universal power ... That is far from the case. A first minister has only the influence with the Cabinet, which is given him by his personal arguments, his personal qualities, and his personal weight. But this is not all. All his colleagues he must convince, some he may have to humour, some even to cajole: a harassing, laborious and ungracious task.
> Rosebery, Sir Robert Peel (1899), p. 201.

In his own writings, many passages have a clear autobiographical reference and this passage gives a good account of his troubled fifteen-month ministry which was characterised by division, discord and defeat. It was a bleak inheritance. On March 4, 1894, Gladstone met the Queen for the last time as her Prime Minister. She accepted his resignation but denied him the courtesy of proposing his successor. Gladstone would have suggested Earl Spencer, but in an unprecedented exercise of her prerogative, the Queen sent for Rosebery and commissioned him to form a Government. She had great confidence and personal affection for the eloquent aristocrat. Rosebery represented stability and order, whereas Gladstone, in her view, embodied one of the worst elements of democracy: demagoguery.

As Prime Minister he had to guide a party which had just lost its greatest leader. In this role, incongruities in Rosebery's character and political agenda which had previously coexisted soon clashed. Reviewing Rosebery's political career, John St Loe Strachey identifies seven Lord Roseberies:

1. The Home Rule Lord Rosebery
2. The Unionist Lord Rosebery
3. The Democratic Socialist labour Radical Lord Rosebery
4. Lord Rosebery the Political Boss
5. Lord Rosebery the man above party

6. Lord Rosebery the Sphinx
7. The Newmarket Lord Rosebery[160]

Strachey omitted the 8th Rosebery - the tartan Rosebery. In isolation, each persona is useful and important. However, the adoption of these qualities simultaneously was a sure formula for disaster. Rosebery had many talents, but they did not combine well in the premiership which required single-mindedness and firm leadership.

As Gladstone's vast array of promises were being called in, Rosebery soon realised his unenviable and untenable position . In his first appearance in the Lords as Premier, he placed the Irish Question on hold until England, the Predominant Partner, was converted. Morley, an architect of the second Home Rule Bill, recorded the following interchange shortly after this notorious speech,

> R. [Rosebery] not particularly agitated, though he knew pretty well that he had been indiscreet. "I blurted it out," he said. "For Heaven's sake," said I, "blurt out what you please about any country in the whole world, civilised or barbarous, except Ireland. Irish affairs are the very last field for that practice." R.: "You know that you and I have agreed a hundred times that until England agree H.R. will never pass." J.M. [John Morley]: "That may be true. The substance of your declaration may be as sound as you please, but not to be said at this delicate moment."[161]

The incongruity of Rosebery's Predominant Partner speech and Gladstone's Home Rule policy was not lost on Joseph Chamberlain who observed acidly,

> We now have a Prime Minister who is willing to support Home Rule

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[160] John St Loe Strachey, "The Seven Lord Roseberies," The Nineteenth Century, vol. xxxvi, October, 1894, p. 489.

[161] John, Viscount Morley, Recollections (2 vols., London, 1917), vol. ii, p. 21, entry dated March 13, 1894.

> though he has no faith in its early success. He is willing to disestablish one church or establish three, as may be more convenient. He is willing to abolish the House of Lords, even at the cost of revolution, though he is himself in favour of a second chamber. ... In Mr Gladstone at any rate we had a man who succeeded in convincing himself, before he tried to convince others. But Lord R is not convinced, and he does not seem to think that anyone needs conviction. Mr Gladstone was one of those whom it was sometimes said that his earnestness ran away with his judgement, but Lord Rosebery allows his judgement to be run away with by the earnestness of other people.[162]

This was not an auspicious start to a new ministry. Rosebery believed that the party could not rest on its Gladstonian laurels. His aims were admirable but his timing was not propitious. The true folly (of which Rosebery was well aware) was that any measure which survived the Commons would be torpedoed by the House of Lords. With a majority of 30 in the Commons, a pathetic minority in the Lords and a Cabinet racked by internal division, Rosebery's Government was destined to fail and to fall.

Ironically, one of Rosebery's greatest personal successes proved to be a political disaster. He won the Derby only a few months after rising to the premiership and had the unfortunate good luck to win it again in 1895 only weeks before his Government fell. He fulfilled the dream for which he had left Oxford in 1869 to pursue, but there was a cost. Many Liberals were Nonconformists who were unyielding in their deprecation of all forms of gambling. As Bebbington noted, "Even if there had been no disagreement with Rosebery over questions of policy, their opposition to his sporting interests distanced Nonconformists from the Liberal leader."[163] Rosebery could ill afford to distance his allies.

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[162] Chamberlain, "Speech at Edinburgh," March 22, 1894, in Garvin and Amery, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, vol. ii, p. 578.

[163] David W. Bebbington, The Nonconformist Conscience: Chapel and Politics, 1870 - 1914 (London, 1982), p. 53.

Not surprisingly, Rosebery's premiership was largely unproductive in terms of legislation. Its narrow majority in the Commons and its vast array of promises created a stalemate. Most bills were read once - maybe twice - before being abandoned because of lack of time or support. Any bill which made its way through the Commons faced an implacable and increasingly belligerent House of Lords. The Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill, one of the few measures to make it through the Commons, was defeated by their Lordships by a staggering margin of 249 to 30.[164]

In 1894, the most notable piece of legislation was Harcourt's Budget. To finance the greatly increased naval estimates, Harcourt introduced death duties - a provision to which both Rosebery and Gladstone objected. A private bill for Scottish Disestablishment was introduced as well as a government measure for Welsh Disestablishment. Both measures eventually were abandoned to the consternation of their proponents. The Scots resented Wales having first priority.

However, Scotland had cause for some celebration. To deal more effectively with Scottish legislation, the Scottish Grand Committee was established by Rosebery. It consisted of all Scottish MPs plus an additional number of members to create a party balance similar to the entire House of Commons. The Grand Committee first considered the Scottish Local Government Bill which eventually received Royal Assent. This measure extended the system of local councils to Scotland.[165] Rosebery attributed the smooth passage of this Act to two factors,

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[164] Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 28, col. 979, August 14, 1894.

[165] On March 5, 1894, Sir George Otto Trevelyan, the Secretary for Scotland, prepared a memorandum [RP, MS 10145, f. 84] for Rosebery outlining Scottish measures to be mentioned in the Queen's Speech. These included the Local Government Bill and the establishment of a Grand Committee and it mentioned a new Crofter's Bill (which never came to fruition). A similar (but briefer) memorandum [RP, MS 10147, f. 45, January 25, 1895] was also prepared by Trevelyan for 1895.

> I attribute it largely to the beneficent experiment of a Scotch Grand Committee, in which by a mechanism, which might well be carried further with advantage, the affairs of Scotland have been dealt with in a manner more complete, more efficient, and less annoying - if I may so speak without offence - to the general body of members of the sister kingdom than has hitherto been the case. In the second place, I attribute it to something more permanent, I am happy to say, than even the Scotch Grand Committee - the abiding common sense of the representatives of Scotland in both Houses.[166]

On public platforms, Rosebery attempted to direct the nation and the party to a more unifying - and necessary - issue: the reform of the House of Lords. At Bradford in October 1894, he warned that the House of Lords, "invites unrest, it invites agitation, and in certain cases the cup might boil over, and it might invite revolution."[167] Rosebery flung down the gauntlet - asking for the people's support to reform the Lords. The gauntlet was not picked up, the movement did not take root. The Government's majority and morale continued to decline after two defeats at by-elections.[168] Another ominous note was sounded on December 29, 1894, when Gladstone gave an address on the occasion of his 85th birthday on the Armenian atrocities, rumours of which had begun to reach Britain.[169]

Despite these discouraging augurs, Rosebery did retreat without a fight. To restore a measure of loyalty, he threatened to resign at the Cabinet of February 19, 1895. This stunt worked. On the 21st, he wrote to the Queen,

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[166] Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 28, col. 1364, August 17, 1894

[167] Rosebery "Speech at Bradford," October 27, 1894, in The Times, October 29, p. 7.

[168] At Forfarshire, a Liberal majority of 866 in 1892 was transformed into a Conservative majority of 286, while in Brigg a Liberal majority of 427 became a Conservative majority of 77. F. W. S. Craig (ed.), British Parliamentary Results, 1885 - 1918 (London, 1974), pp. 541 and 337.

[169] Gladstone, "Speech at Hawarden," December 29, 1894, in The Times, December 31, p. 6. Recalling his struggles in 1876, Gladstone maintained, "Every nation and if need be every human being has authority on behalf of humanity and of justice."

> The question as to the amount of personal support received in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister from his colleagues, which had formed the subject of the last Cabinet, was today briefly dismissed by Lord Rosebery, who yesterday held interviews with eleven of his colleagues, successively, in reference to this point.[170]

Rosebery somehow managed to obtain copies of Kimberley's journal related to this incident. On February 19th, Kimberley, the Foreign Secretary, noted "his announcement came like a thunder bolt, no one having the slightest idea that he was contemplating resignation." After the Cabinet on the 21st, Kimberley confided, "It would be amiss to deny that our confidence in his judgement was seriously shaken. His extreme sensitiveness to personal attacks indicate a certain weakness in his character."[171] Rosebery confided to his own notes,

> [Kimberley's] amazement shows that the device was successful. It would of course not have been possible for me to resign. But it was the only way in which I could restore discipline, or deal with the open and insulting disloyalty of one member of the Cabinet at least [i.e. Harcourt]... I called a Cabinet to play the last card left to me, and on the whole it succeeded.[172]

Despite this effort, the 1895 session was even less fruitful. Segments of the party demanded legislation or threatened revolt. No major measures were carried, but three important bills were introduced. To placate the Irish, a complicated and far-reaching Irish Land Bill was introduced to amend certain provisions of the 1881 Land Act in favour of the tenants. To appease the Welsh Radicals, a more extensive Welsh Disestablishment Bill

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[170] G. E. Buckle (ed.), The Letters of Queen Victoria (3rd ser.), vol. ii, p. 479, Rosebery to the Queen dated February 21, 1895.

[171] RP, MS 10147, f. 159, extracts from Kimberley's journal written in Rosebery's hand dated February 19 and February 21, 1895. It is unclear when or how Rosebery obtained these copies. Rosebery's notes were undated. Rosebery gave his own detailed account of the February 19th Cabinet in RP, MS 10147, ff. 146 - 157.

[172] RP, MS 10147, f. 161. n. d., Rosebery's reflections on Kimberley's journal entries.

was introduced. Finally to assuage the Nonconformist temperance lobby - which threatened to join the opposition - the Local Control Bill was introduced to give power to localities to regulate the trade in intoxicating liquors. Rosebery at least attempted to honour the Newcastle Programme.

After the Easter and Whitsuntide recesses, the ministry seemed poised to collapse. The Welsh and Irish each demanded primacy, the Scots were angry and the Nonconformists were growing intemperate. On June 17th, Rosebery suffered a personal defeat when £500 for a statue for Cromwell - which he personally proposed - was removed from the estimates after the outcry of Irish members. On June 19th, The Times reported that Gladstone had cancelled his pairing,

> The reason assigned is that the member for Midlothian wishes to be regarded as having an open mind upon the Welsh Disestablishment Bill; but inasmuch as the breaking of the pair will deprive Ministers of the value of the right hon. gentleman's vote at all times, the belief prevails that his real object is to indicate his dissatisfaction with the methods of the Government generally.[173]

The end was imminent. On June 21, 1895, the Government was defeated by a margin of 132 to 125 on a snap division to reduce the salary of the Secretary of War (Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman(**)) by £100 due to an alleged inadequate supply of cordite for ammunition.[174] Rosebery seized this opportunity to bring his premiership to an end. The party remained divided during the election and not surprisingly the Liberals suffered a landslide defeat.[175] After the poll, Rosebery wrote to Spencer,

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[173] The Times, June 19, 1895, p. 9.

[174] Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 34, col. 1712, June 21, 1895.

[175] Only the magnitude of the Liberals' defeat was surprising; the Conservatives carried 340 seats, the Liberal Unionists: 71, the Liberals: 177 and the Irish Nationalists: 82.

> The Newcastle Programme had alienated every interest in the country; and the three best reported Liberal leaders fought the election or tried to fight it on three different policies. I have always thought that the Liberal party would go to pieces as soon as the late Government came to an end. That may yet come. If it does not, the General Election will have been the best thing that could have happened for the party, which had like a straggling evergreen to be cut down to the roots before it could flourish again.[176]

Rosebery was reluctant to take blame even though, as party leader, he must be at least partially responsible for the success or failure of his party. Rosebery was never reluctant to take his share of the glory, but rarely admitted his share in defeat.

Resignation of Liberal Leadership

In opposition, Rosebery advised patience until the Conservative government had fully unfolded its programme. To his credit, Rosebery remained active as party leader - determined to make the party viable. Events made silence impossible. The long-simmering Eastern Question again exploded, when the Turkish government felt compelled to massacre a large segment of its citizenry; the Armenians felt the brunt of these horrific atrocities. Gladstone, then 85, raised his powerful voice in defence of the Armenians and urged the 'Concert of Europe' to take action and if they refused for Britain to act alone.

In Chester, on August 6, 1895, under the auspices of the Armenian Relief Fund, Gladstone appealed to his audience, "We must be determined that with the help of God, and so far as depends upon us, that which is necessary and that which is just shall be done, whether there be resistance or

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[176] RP, MS 10131, p. 12, Rosebery to Spencer [copy] dated August 12, 1895.

whether there be none."[177] Here marked a fundamental dividing line between Gladstone and Rosebery. On his 88th birthday, Gladstone remarked, "I think the basis of my mind is laid principally in finance and philanthropy." Rosebery refused to focus Britain's foreign policy according to philanthropic aims.[178] This distinction is clearly seen in their different approaches to the Armenian Question.

Rosebery was accustomed to the wrath of Unionists, but he now had to withstand the fury of Gladstone. Gladstone had no malice towards Rosebery, but Canon Malcolm MacColl, a close friend of Gladstone and an instigator behind Gladstone's Armenian Campaign, said "I have shed no tears on the Liberal collapse. I gave them up a year ago and have done my best to damage them throughout the country for their feeble diplomacy on the Armenian Question."[179] Rosebery stood firm. He expressed his concerns to A. L. Brown,[180] the Secretary of the Midlothian Liberal Association,

> I at any rate will have nothing to do with involving my country in a European war after a week of which many of those loudest in urging it would be loudest in denouncing it. I do not view this as a 'Liberal' matter at all! I view it as a question of humanity. But it is not true humanity to risk a universal slaughter on this occasion, more especially as the universal slaughter would probably be preceded by the extinction of the population on whose behalf war would be declared. Why does not the Liberal party chose some leader to its mind someone who would speak without responsibility or knowledge on the first gust of every popular emotion? At any rate, I know one Liberal leader who

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[177] Gladstone, "Speech at Chester," August 6, 1895, in The Times, August 7, p. 4. The president of the Armenian Relief fund was Rosebery's nemesis, the Duke of Argyll.

[178] Mallet, Contemporary Review, July, 1929, p. 23.

[179] G. W. E. Russell (ed.), Malcolm MacColl: Memoirs & Correspondence (London, 1914), p. 142.

[180] Alexander Laing Brown (1851 - 1930) was a Radical [Gladstonian] MP for Hawick (1886 - 92). He actively lobbied the Scottish Liberal Association to become more progressive.

is only too ready to retire to his kailyard and cultivate his cabbages.[181]

As time passed, Gladstone's impatience grew and his importunity sharpened. In his final political address at Liverpool on September 24, 1896, following an additional massacre in Constantinople, he directly countered Rosebery. Rosebery urged patience and reliance on the concert of Europe while Gladstone demanded urgent and if necessary unilateral action. Rosebery feared a European War - a fear which Gladstone dismissed as being caused by either weakness or cowardice,

> I therefore do not believe and do not entertain for a moment this phantasm which is raised to alarm us, if our nerves be in a particular state of weakness - this phantasm of European War, against measures unselfish, just and directed to the stoppage of brutal and horrible massacres on an unexampled scale. I do not believe that Europe or any part of Europe, will make war to secure the continuance of these massacres.[182]

Gladstone's voice was raised and his pen was unsheathed. In September 1896, he described the Sultan as "the assassin who sits on the throne in Constantinople."[183] In the October issue of The Nineteenth Century, he demanded that if no action was taken, "I would respectively propose that the old word 'honour' should be effaced from our dictionaries and dropped from our language."[184]

Rosebery's position was now clearly untenable. Gladstone had publicly

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[181] RP, MS 10131, p. 99, Rosebery to A. L. Brown [copy] dated September 23, 1896. The last allusion indicated that Rosebery was abreast of the 'Kailyard' movement in Scottish Literature.

[182] Gladstone, "Speech at Liverpool," September 24, 1896, in The Times, September 25, p. 5.

[183] The Times, September 4, 1896, p. 4.

[184] Gladstone, "The Massacres in Turkey," in The Nineteenth Century, vol. xl, October, 1896, p. 680.

questioned his nerve and honour. Though the thought of Gladstone returning to active politics was ridiculous, Rosebery, with his ever sensitive nature, had reached the breaking point. Finally on October 8, 1896, Rosebery published a letter to Tom Ellis(**), the chief Liberal Whip, resigning the party leadership.[185] He wrote to Gladstone on October 7th,

> I wish you to know from myself that I have resigned the leadership of the Liberal party-that is, if I ever held it, of which I am not quite sure!
>
> I will not disguise that you have, by again coming forward and advocating a policy which I cannot support, innocently and unconsciously dealt the *coup de grâce*, by enabling discontented Liberals to pelt me with your authority. But, as you well know, the situation has long been almost impossible and almost intolerable, and I for one am glad that it should cease.
>
> I hope that my retirement may at any rate produce some greater amount of unity in the distracted and honeycombed party called 'Liberal.'[186]

To make his severance public, he addressed a large and enthusiastic audience in Edinburgh's Empire Theatre on October 9.[187] He again expressed his fear of European war which threatened the very foundation of the Empire, because "The British Empire is peace. It means peace and it needs peace." While maintaining a reverence toward Gladstone, he vindicated himself and his stance,

> I know very well that this is not the popular side of the question. ... I care very little in this matter which it is - the unpopular or the popular side. I remember very well that, when I was a child, Mr Bright and Mr Cobden were hounded out of public office for opposing a war for which no one now ventures to say a word in defence. I remember

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[185] The Times, October 8, 1896, p. 7.

[186] GP, Add MS 44290, f. 267, Rosebery to Gladstone dated October 7, 1896.

[187] Rosebery's letter to Haldane [Haldane MSS, MS 5904, f. 95] dated September 16, 1896 indicates that this Edinburgh meeting had been arranged previously. The Empire Theatre has been recently refurbished and renamed the Festival Theatre.

> when I was grown up, Mr Gladstone had his windows broken, and was mobbed in London, for advocating a policy on this very Eastern question, which at the general election two years afterwards was the policy of the nation itself.[188]

Beneath the rhetoric, Rosebery's feelings were hurt and his pride was bruised. The note alluded to in chapter 2, in which Rosebery remarked on a half-sheet of notepaper "that from the first his main fault had been Pride"[189] deserves some attention. Rosebery was a great man, he knew it and so did the public. He delighted in the attention and adulation he received.[190] However, as Solomon wrote many centuries ago, "Pride goeth before destruction and an haughty spirit before a fall."[191] Rosebery's pride and sensitivity - which were inextricably linked - contributed to his ill-starred premiership and his resignation of party leadership in 1896 and assured that his resignation would remain permanent. Pride inspired both action and lethargy. Rosebery found a safe refuge in his retirement. He spoke as he liked and always drew great crowds, but to actually return to the political fray required sacrifice and risk. He risked a position of wide acclaim and respect to secure a post in which neither quantity was guaranteed. Maybe, pride - in its various manifestations - was indeed Rosebery's main fault.

After 1896, Rosebery drifted rudderlessly - cut off from Gladstone and the party. Raymond suggests the implications of this severance,

> As the disciple of Mr. Gladstone, [Rosebery] had many points of

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[188] The Times, October 10, 1896, p. 6.

[189] Crewe, vol. ii, p. 659 and Rhodes James, p. 48.

[190] Sir Edward Grey recorded a typical incident whilst travelling with Rosebery at Waterloo Station, London: "The obsequiousness of the station officials to R. was wonderful; his neat little man in black had gone ahead, bought a ticket, engaged a compartment and put the whole station on alert ... It seemed as if the train would hardly be able to start, so great was the occasion." G. M. Trevelyan, Grey of Fallodon (London, 1937), p. 73, Grey to his wife dated July 31, 1900.

[191] Proverbs, chapter 16, verse 18 (Authorised Version).

> superiority over his model; the echo was often more impressive than the voice. But when the voice was silenced the echo grew fainter; in due course it ceased, and that sensitive diaphragm that was Lord Rosebery began to give back mere sonorous confusion to the shoutings of a confused world.[192]

Between 1886 and 1896, Rosebery had risen to the apex of power and he seemed poised to return to those majestic heights. His resignation appeared to be a brief delaying action. Only a few months after his resignation, he penned a coy memorandum which implied that his retirement was temporary but as with most of such musings his audience was himself,

> It is time in view of appeals that are telegraphed to me from England to declare myself on the Cretan question[193] and to attempt to control events that I should define my position. It is clear enough. On October 9,[194] I resigned the leadership of the Liberal party, and two days afterwards, I bade it more or less formally farewell. I did not make it clear then whether I said farewell to the Liberal party, to party politics, or to public life. It is not necessary now to make that clear, at any rate for my present purpose.
>
> But the main point is obvious and remains in force. I resigned the leadership of the Liberal party, not to destroy that party but to promote its union. With the same object, I have ever since remained persistently silent and refused all engagements. I could not in my judgement within six months of my resignation step forward, and by taking an independent line, embarrass the Liberal party, which I have always sought to serve, especially by my resignation.
>
> This view does not necessarily imply my permanent silence or retirement. It is of course difficult to fix an arbitrary limit of time for this and I shall not attempt to do so. But six months under the circumstances would appear a decent minimum.
>
> Beyond this I am bound to say that I have had a revolting

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[192] Raymond, p. 19.

[193] The Cretan Question was yet another manifestation of the complex Eastern Question. Christians on Crete, under the dominion of the Turkish Empire, expressed their desire to be ruled by Greece. The Concert of Europe including Lord Salisbury favoured continuing Turkish rule over the Island while popular and Liberal opinion in Britain favoured the Cretans' desire to be ruled by Greece.

[194] This should be October 7. Rosebery resigned by letter on the 7th of October and delivered his resignation speech on the 9th.

> experience of the higher positions in British government, and that it will take some time to wash out of my mouth the taste of the last administration.[195]

Politics rarely run true to course. Rosebery's resignation proved final. He left the Liberal Party but did he abandon Liberalism?

Rosebery's political creed is Liberal in its essence and origin, but the conclusion of his career tends to undermine his integrity as a Liberal. Rosebery entered the political arena stage left and exited stage right. After first entering office in October 1881, Rosebery discussed the challenge of remaining a true Liberal,

> Gentlemen it is easy in the springtide of youth, when all is full of life and energy, to be attached to Liberal principles. The time of trial comes as age creeps on and the pulse grows colder, and we become mere arm-chair politicians. I hope sincerely that, if I am spared for many years, it may be my fate not to be a backslider from this cause.[196]

In 1885, Rosebery asked, "What is a Liberal? Speaking for myself, it consists in this, that I wish to move in company with the great mass of the nation - rather in front of them than behind them."[197] As we contemplate Rosebery's final years, this question persists, did he remain true to the Liberal faith or had he been a backslider? Resignation from the party did not imply a rejection of Liberalism. In the preface to his Glasgow speech of 1909, Rosebery noted,

> At every accession of the throne, the old great seal is broken and

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[195] RP, MS 10177, f. 103, memorandum written in Naples dated February 26, 1897.

[196] The Scotsman, October 27, 1881, p. 9.

[197] Rosebery, "Address to the 7th Annual Meeting of Midlothian Liberal Association," Edinburgh, June 29, 1885, in The Scotsman, June 30, p. 7.

> invalidated, and a new one is fabricated, which gives the only authorised impression. In the same way, at every general election a new brand is made for the Liberal party, and those who do not bear its mark are outside the legitimate ranks. But it does not follow that they did not belong to the old party and bear the old stamp.[198]

During the years 1896 - 1929, Rosebery certainly did not bear the official Liberal 'stamp,' but he was neither silent nor irrelevant.

Epilogue 1896-1929

> There is a natural curiosity to know how the rulers of mankind demean themselves when fortune turns or when they turn their backs on fortune. To humanity at large, they are indeed then more interesting than in their splendour.
> Rosebery Napoleon: The Last Phase (2nd ed., London, 1904), p. xii.

Rosebery's final years are as fascinating as they are frustrating. After twenty years in politics, Rosebery's optimism and progressivism had been blunted. Confronted with truly radical, even revolutionary legislation, Rosebery, instead of marching at the fore, cast his lot with the beleaguered defenders of the nation. From the periphery, he remained active and exerted great influence. The caption to the second of Rosebery's two Vanity Fair portraits was,

> In the great affairs of the Empire [Rosebery] seems to let his chances - and they have been many - slip. He is supposed to know all about Foreign affairs; and twice he has been their Secretary of State; but like a brilliant meteor, he has left no mark upon the shifting sands of time. He still has a future, for he is but three and fifty. Will he ever overtake it?[199]

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[198] Rosebery, The Budget: Its Principles and Scope [Reprint of Rosebery's speech at Glasgow, September 10, 1909] (London, 1909), preface.

[199] Vanity Fair Album, 1901, portrait # 734.

Rosebery's promise was never questioned, but his return grew more remote. He dealt with politics as it suited him leaving him ample time for other diversions, including both reading and writing. One of his favourite comic novels was, The Diary of a Nobody,[200] and he was a great admirer of Marcus Clarke's For the Term of His Natural Life. This is unusual since Clarke shatters the illusion that the new world offered a haven from the evils of the old world.[201] Rosebery wrote,

> Long ago I fell upon 'His Natural Life' by accident and read it not once or twice but many times at different periods ... To me I confess it is the most terrible of all novels, more terrible than 'Oliver Twist' or Victor Hugo's most startling effects, for the simple reason it is more real.[202]

His affinity for this novel gives an insight into the dark, morbid side of Rosebery's character. At several points in his life, he believed that death was imminent. In 1895, Brett noted, Rosebery has "in the prime of life - everything that men toil for; wealth, power, position, everything! Yet he is a lonely sleepless man!"[203] Nine months before he died, he wrote his sister,

> Do you remember when we went to Barnbougle together that I was hunting for a paper. I did not find it nor have I found it. But I want to tell you what it was. It was verses written by me when I was about ten, exactly predicting what I am suffering from now. They began, 'How long O Lord, How Long.' and went into the various troubles incident to my present position: a most memorable piece of

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[200] Crewe, vol. ii, p. 665. In 1910, Rosebery noted "I am devoted to that small classic, 'The Diary of a Nobody,' and I have, I suspect, purchased and given away more copies than any living man." This appreciation was printed in George and Weedon Grossmith, The Diary of a Nobody (London, 1935).

[201] Stuart Macintyre, A Colonial Liberalism: The Lost World of Three Victorian Visionaries (Oxford, 1991), p. 207.

[202] A letter dated January 16, 1884 from Rosebery to Mrs Clarke included in Hamilton Mackinnon (ed.), The Marcus Clarke Memorial Volume (Melbourne, 1884).

[203] Journals of Viscount Esher, vol. i, p. 188, letter from Esher to Rev. C. D. Williamson dated March 14, 1895.

prediction.[204]

It is not unusual for a man of 81 to contemplate death, but for a ten-year-old boy such sentiments seem out of place.

Literary Career

> We must acknowledge that, though our political opinions are by no means aristocratical, we always feel kindly disposed towards noble authors. Industry, and a taste for intellectual pleasures, are peculiarly respectable in those who can afford to be idle and who have every temptation to be dissipated.
> Macaulay's Essay, "War of the Succession in Spain."[205]

Macaulay explains how Rosebery's literary efforts deepened and enhanced his already significant fame: he could speak and write. Rosebery's career as a nobleman of letters gives additional depth to his own biography,[206] but more importantly, his writings give insight into his thoughts and experiences as a politician. The bulk of his writing occurred during his retirement which enabled him to reflect upon his career, but these reflections themselves were slanted by the experiences of intervening years. His written works are essential to understanding his political career and ideology. A complete review of Rosebery's literary output is impossible, but the subject, slant and style of his writing are revealing.

In 1870, he commenced his literary career by publishing an

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[204] Petworth MSS, PHA 5586, f. 36, Rosebery to Constance, Lady Leconfield, dated August 22, 1928. The scriptural reference is to Psalm 13, verse 1 (Authorised Version), "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? For ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?"

[205] F. C. Montague (ed.), Critical and Historical Essays, Contributed to the Edinburgh Review by Lord Macaulay (3 vols., London, 1903), vol. i, p. 485.

[206] Rosebery's maxim [Chatham: His Early Life and Connections, p. x], "the life of any man that ever lived on earth is far more than his public career," certainly applies to himself.

appreciation of his friend Frederick Vyner[207] who died at the hands of Greek brigands. The obituary published in the Morning Post on May 19, 1870 captured the Queen's attention.[208] Rosebery eulogised, "a stone thrown in the water produces wider and wider ripples till all be calm, and wide have been the ripples caused by his fall."[209] He delighted in exploring the lives of the great and nearly great men of his day and of ages past.

> After all is said and done there is no writing or reading so charming as biography. In the writing of it there is the secret delight of identifying yourself more and more with the man you describe till at last you seem to be able to give a sequence a character and a reason for every action of his life.[210]

With such a goal, a biographer of Rosebery is quickly disappointed and discouraged: sequence and reason are both elusive.

Rosebery's writing was often tinted by romanticism which is not surprising, given his own affection for the writings of Macaulay and Scott and the poetry of Gray and Aytoun. In keeping with this inclination, Rosebery explained, "It is at any rate the lost causes which interest me - the doomed minorities, the phantom courts, Stuarts, Bonapartes, Confederates, Neapolitan Bourbons all have a tragic fascination of their own."[211] The greater the unfulfilled promise, the more a cause takes on a romantic glow. Rosebery's great promise makes his decline even more fascinating and tragic.

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[207] Frederick Grantham Vyner (1847 - 1870) was Rosebery's contemporary at Eton and Christ Church. Rosebery organised a memorial to Vyner which adorns Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford.

[208] RP, MS 10072, f. 76, Baroness Waterpark to Rosebery dated July 21st [1870].

[209] RP, MS 10072, f. 65, copy Frederick Vyner's obituary which appeared in The Morning Post on May 19, 1870.

[210] RP, MS 10189, f. 86, memorandum dated November 8, 1872.

[211] Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 9, p. 4, dated 1905.

His most famous studies were his brief monograph on the younger Pitt, his memoir of Lord Randolph Churchill and his study of Napoleon's last years. As seen in his Lord Randolph Churchill, Rosebery's elevated vantage point made him a valuable commentator of his own age. Rosebery declined invitations to write the official biographies of Disraeli, Gladstone and Kitchener, which could have assured his place as a first rank political biographer. The reasons for these refusals - apart from a professed modesty - are not clear, because Rosebery had time and certainly possessed the literary skill to attempt these monumental works. Winston Churchill noted this reluctance,

> He never planned or executed a work of the first magnitude - a work to hold the field against all comers for a century. His taste, discernment, and learning were directed to partial tasks, and in these he attracts and stimulates the reader, only to leave his main curiosities unsatisfied.[212]

More serious criticisms were raised concerning the content and overall structure of Rosebery's studies,

> Some passages reach nobility, none reaches grandeur; many are persuasive, none is compelling. What is lacking is as necessary to a philosopher or a poet as it is to a man of action ... It is a want of unity, of strong single feeling, of purpose. His perceptions like his efforts, are unsustained and unrelated, lacking in concentration and therefore in force. There is honesty, frankness, generosity; there are convictions; but there is no single unifying conviction or conception, no faith or passion, or need of accomplishment.[213]

In essence, Rosebery was criticised for not fulfilling an exaggerated expectation. He was an eloquent biographer, but not a great historian. Rosebery's comments on the Life of Frederick the Great demonstrate his skill

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[212] Churchill, Great Contemporaries, p. 15.

[213] Norman Hapgood, Literary Statesmen & Others (London, 1897), p. 15.

at writing appreciations rather than full length studies,

> What is greatness? What is glory? .... At this time Howard, in obscurity, was lightening prisons and succouring hopeless prisoners. Jenner was ridding mankind of the loathsome scourge of smallpox. An obscure group of pious enthusiasts were striving to free the world from the curse of slavery. Wesley was bringing a new joy of hope and faith into the dark places of his country. No one called these men great and glorious for their poor achievements; they were merely preserving and solacing humanity, while the great and glorious were earning laurels by destroying it. But history when it is written in just proportion and with regard to the eternal truths which ultimately govern the world, may distribute its honours in a different spirit.[214]

In the climate of modern scholarship, these sentiments about 'eternal truths' seem quaint, but these remarks reflected Rosebery's slant on history which was strongly sentimental and Whiggish. History teaches, rebukes, informs, and warns those who seek its guidance. The parade of history does not always march uniformly but according to Rosebery it moves forward,

> But I remain in the conviction that, though individuals may suffer, when we take stock of a century at its end, we shall find that the world is better and happier than it was at the beginning. *Sursum Corda*. Lift up your hearts, for the world is moving onward. Its chariot wheels may crush for the moment, but it does not move to evil. It is guided from above, and guided we may be sure with wisdom and goodness which will not abandon us.[215]

Unfortunately, Rosebery's literary career ceased prior to the Great War. There is no evidence as to whether this tragic conflict blunted his Whig views.

Raymond has described Rosebery both in political and literary terms

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[214] Rosebery, "Frederick the Great," in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, p. 129.

[215] Rosebery, "Rectorial Address at St. Andrews," September 14, 1911, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 177. "Lift up Your Hearts" was one of Rosebery's favourite hymns.

as a "brilliant amateur."[216] Concerning his style, Buchan noted that Rosebery

> is less fullblooded than Macaulay, but juster and more penetrating; for all his brilliance he writes for truth differing from the modern school of biographers, who skip along in the wake of Mr Lytton Strachey ... He had no creed to preach; he left his facts as a rule to point the moral; he was not cumbered with any academic philosophy of history.[217]

Comparing Rosebery the historian to Macaulay is as unfair as comparing Rosebery the politician to Gladstone. However, both Rosebery and Macaulay (of course in varying degrees) wrote to a large reading public and secured wide popularity beyond the narrow confines of academia. Rhodes James, in a modern analysis, noted, "his principal defect as a historian was an excessive preoccupation with the interesting and vivid, and with the polish of the final portrait rather than the meticulous accuracy of that portrait."[218] Rosebery did write to educate and entertain, but Rhodes James' criticism about his accuracy is unfair. For Pitt, Chatham and Napoleon, he read widely and consulted all of the available manuscript material. Like his Uncle Stanhope, Rosebery was painstaking in his research. He also included sections of primary material in Pitt. The extent of his scholarship and attention to detail can be seen in his heavily annotated and corrected personal copies.[219]

Rosebery, like most authors, had his fair share of egotism and sensitivity. Among his papers, he kept extensive bound volumes containing

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[216] Raymond, p. 176.

[217] Scottish Historical Society, ser. 3, vol. xvi, 43rd Annual Meeting held on December 14, 1929, Appendix, p. 5.

[218] Rhodes James, p. 214.

[219] The National Library of Scotland has three special collections, Ry [Rosebery], Dur [Durdans] and Dal [Dalmeny], containing some of Rosebery's books and pamphlets. Dur 1406 is his annotated copy of Napoleon and Dur 1407 is his corrected copy of Napoleon with extensive amendments.

all press notices - favourable or critical - of his major works.[220] Rosebery was keenly interested in the views of others. As a writer and as Foreign Secretary, he received wide acclaim, whereas as Prime Minister and party leader, he received criticism and grief. He recalled the appropriate words of Burke to provide his own political epitaph, "'What shadows we are and what shadows we pursue.' These memorable and pathetic words ... sum up the life of every politician and perhaps every man."[221]

The Liberal League

> "Can you tell me" She asked "What all the excitement is about just now?"
> "Haven't an idea" said the White King [Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman] "unless it's the awakening."
> "The what?" said Alice.
> "The Red King [Rosebery], you know; has been asleep for ever so long, and he's going to wake up today. Not that it makes any difference that I can see - he talks just as loud when he's asleep."
> "Alice goes to Chesterfield" in Saki, The Westminster Alice[222]

Though retired, Rosebery remained in contact with his allies and was keenly aware of the political situation. The party was so divided in Scotland that the Unionists secured a majority of MPs in 1900 for the first time since 1832. Campbell-Bannerman, the Liberal leader, and Rosebery, the leader in exile, publicly quarrelled over the Boer War and the Irish Question. On June 14, 1901, while addressing the National Reform Union, Campbell-Bannerman made his memorable utterance, "when was a war not a war? When it was carried on by methods of barbarism in South Africa."[223] Privately, Rosebery

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[220] Dur 1887 for Chatham, Dur 1711 for Pitt and RP, MS 10217 for Napoleon.

[221] Rosebery, "Burke," October 30, 1904, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, p. 139.

[222] Saki, The Complete Works of Saki, pp. 337 - 8.

[223] Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, "Speech at the National Reform Union," London, June 14, 1901, in The Times, June 15, p. 12.

reacted strongly,

> The speeches made on that occasion seem to mark a new and ominous departure in the troubled history of the Liberal party ... For my part and I speak only for myself I deplore these speeches. They will not I believe injure the government or benefit the opposition, if those be their object. They will I fear give pleasure to only three classes: 1. The Boers in arms against us and their partisans. 2. Our hostile critics in Europe and the United States: and (3) the enemies of the Liberal party.[224]

At this juncture, Rosebery broke his moratorium on public political addresses.[225] The City Liberal Club sent Rosebery an invitation to address them, to which he responded with a letter on July 17. Though the Liberal party seemed divided over the war, Rosebery saw a larger division, "A sincere, fundamental, and incurable antagonism of principle with regard to the Empire at large and our consequent policy."[226] Rosebery accurately identified the issue which explained the party's divisions over the Boer War and the Irish Question. The political world was abuzz, Rosebery's return to power riding on an Imperial chariot seemed imminent. Compared to Rosebery, Campbell-Bannerman appeared to be a stand-in party leader.[227]

On July 18th and 19th, The Times printed commentaries from the major

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[224] RP, MS 10177, f. 128, n.d. [presumably late June 1901].

[225] From October 1896 to July 1901, Rosebery spoke in public but limited himself to literary or historical appreciations.

[226] The letter dated July 16 appeared in The Times, July 17, 1901, p. 7. Rosebery apparently acted on his own accord. Hamilton remarked in his diary for July 17th [Bahlman (ed.), Hamilton's Diary, 1885 - 1906, p. 408], "Although I am supposed to enjoy Rosebery's full confidence, he never gave me a hint of his bombshell which he exploded this morning."

[227] For two excellent discussions of the Rosebery/Campbell-Bannerman leadership struggle see David Gutzke, "Rosebery and Campbell-Bannerman: The Conflict over Leadership Reconsidered," Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, vol. liv (1981), 241 - 50 and Stewart J. Brown, "'Echoes of Midlothian': Scottish Liberalism and the South African War, 1899 - 1902," Scottish Historical Review, vol. lxxi (1992), 156 - 83.

world capitals on Rosebery's letter.[228] On July 19th, the Austrian correspondent noted, "It is a long time since the utterance of an English statesman has excited so much comment and criticism here."[229] Rosebery agreed to address the City Liberal Club on July 19th. He believed that the excitement stirred by his letter authenticated his assertions. "When the naked truth in the political world it produces an amount of anguish, howling and misery unspeakable which is the real test of its veracity."[230] Thus, Rosebery justified his actions based upon the uproar which ensued.

In this address, Rosebery coined or rather appropriated two metaphors which have since become associated with his name, "the clean slate" and "the lonely furrow." His advice to the party was simple but dramatic, "You start with a clean slate as regards those cumbersome programmes with which you were overloaded in the past." He identified that "the present paralysis of the party is caused by its attitude to matters of Imperial concern," but he remained reticent about his own position, "For the present at any rate, I must proceed alone. I must plough my lonely furrow, but before I get to the end of that furrow it is possible that I may not find myself alone."[231] Rosebery gave guarded hints about a possible return without making any guarantees.

On December 16, 1901, after unprecedented advertisement and expectation, Rosebery addressed a curious and attentive nation on National Policy at Chesterfield.[232] Wearied from the interminable South African War,

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[228] See The Times, July 18, 1901, p. 5 and July 19, p. 5 for commentary from foreign capitals.

[229] The Times, July 19, 1901, p. 5.

[230] The Times, July 20, 1901, p. 15.

[231] Rosebery, "Speech at the City Liberal Club," July 19, 1901, in The Times, July 20, 1901, p. 12.

[232] "All the resources of advertisement were exhausted on this engagement. The expectancy that reigned reminded old politicians of the Midlothian days. Quiet people in far-away corners of the earth were perplexed by Reuter telegrams giving daily bulletins of what was supposed to be in Lord Rosebery's mind. The public at home was whipped up into a

Britain was eager for change. Rosebery gave the following advice,

> The first piece is this, that you have to clean your slate. [Secondly,] in the case of reform if you promise more than you can perform - when then you alienate not merely those who are opposed to it, but also those who are in favour of it ... [Thirdly,] you should not move very much faster than the great mass of the nation is prepared to move ... The last piece of advice I shall venture to offer the Liberal party is this, that they shall not dissociate themselves, even indirectly or unconsciously, or by any careless words, from the new sentiment of Empire which occupies the nation ... it is a passion of affection and family feeling, of pride and hope and helpfulness.[233]

Clearly, Rosebery expressed his desire to sever himself from Gladstonian obligations, especially the Newcastle Programme. Also, he cautiously, but firmly, wanted to restrain the extreme elements within the party. His programme concentrated in strengthening Imperial bonds. Rosebery concluded, "My watchword if I were in office at this moment would be summed up in one single word - the word efficiency."[234] Rosebery had a platform and the enthusiastic response from this speech suggested that he had a following.[235] Henceforward, Rosebery became associated with the somewhat amorphous but appealing notion of efficiency - a doctrine which

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frenzy of curiosity." Raymond, p. 193.

[233] Rosebery, "National Policy," Chesterfield, December 16, 1901 in The Times, December 17, p. 10.

[234] Rosebery, "National Policy," Chesterfield, December 16, 1901 in The Times, December 17, p. 10. For a more detailed study of Rosebery's involvement see G. R. Searle, The Quest for National Efficiency, A Study in British Politics and Political Thought 1899 - 1914 (Oxford, 1971), pp. 107 - 49.

[235] In the preface to the authorised edition of the Chesterfield address, Rosebery hinted that his return was near, "Let me say another word of the policy of the speech as apart from its form. That policy appears to have received a large meed of general approval. But political opinion, to be effective, must be organised; political energy must work and entrench. I want some of this spade work on behalf of this policy, or else the wave of popular adhesion will be lost in space." Rosebery, National Policy: A Speech Delivered at Chesterfield December 16, 1901 (London, 1902), preface dated Christmas 1901.

no one could sincerely oppose.[236] Raymond Asquith, son of H. H. Asquith, noted the emptiness of Rosebery's programme which becomes apparent on closer inspection,

> Rosebery continues to prance upon the moonbeam of efficiency and makes speeches at every street corner ... No one has the least idea what he wants to 'effect' and beyond a mild bias in favour of good government and himself as Premier, nothing can be gleaned from his speeches[237]

Ever anxious to justify himself, Rosebery later explained his intervention at Chesterfield,

> Last autumn [1901] I received an invitation so weighty in its terms, so important from its source that it was not one to be lightly dismissed and summarily answered as others had been. It came from all the Liberal Associations of the great county of Derby and it asked me to speak to the country and also to the Liberal party as to the crisis in which our country finds itself. After some weeks of deliberation, I decided I could not refuse without discredit, and I went to Chesterfield.[238]

The actual circumstances of his 'invitation' to Chesterfield differed from Rosebery's account.

Since his address in July, he began to consider returning to politics. On August 10th, he wrote his physician, Sir William Broadbent, with

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[236] Wilfrid Lawson, a Liberal MP who supported Campbell-Bannerman, fashioned his critique of efficiency into verse [quoted in Searle, The Quest for National Efficiency, p. 139]:
"Lord Rosebery was a most wonderful man
He had every species of scheme on his shelf
But 'efficiency' still formed the gist of his plan
And 'efficiency' meant nothing else than himself."

[237] John Buchan, Memory Hold-the-door (London, 1940), p. 62, extracts from Raymond Asquith's letters to Buchan [ca. 1902].

[238] Rosebery, "Address at Glasgow," March 10, 1902, in The Times, March 11, p. 11.

his concerns, "As to politics, my deep-seated doubt is whether I could sleep if I returned to their active pursuit."[239] Rosebery was officially invited to Chesterfield by letter on October 10, 1901 and the invitation was made public at the November 11th meeting of the Derby Liberal Association.[240] But the idea was first suggested by Arthur Markham[241] in a letter dated August 18, 1901. Markham, a Derbyshire native who lived in Chesterfield, urged Rosebery to present "a programme & a fighting one," and he suggested that the Derbyshire Liberal Associations would be an appropriate audience.[242] Markham concluded, "If you will let me have a line privately to say if you would give your favourable consideration to a request made by the county associations, I will at once see that the letter is written to you."[243] Rosebery was ready to speak and he responded to Markham, "I should be quite willing - without pledging myself definitely - to consider an invitation such as you suggest."[244] The invitation, therefore, was not as spontaneous as he had implied earlier. He was slow to accept the invitation because he was reluctant to raise "expectations which would not be fulfilled."[245] Rosebery was very adept at raising expectations.

Amidst the excitement caused by the Chesterfield address and his subsequent speech at Liverpool in February 1902, The Times sounded a sobering note, "At the present moment, the party 'machinery' in Scotland is

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[239] RP, MS 10131, p. 279, Rosebery to Dr Broadbent [copy] dated August 10, 1901.

[240] The Times, November 13, 1901, p. 6.

[241] Arthur Basil Markham (1866 - 1911) was the Liberal MP for the Mansfield division of Nottingham (1900 - 16). He was created a Baronet in 1911.

[242] Markham noted, "all the Derbyshire seats are controlled by the mining vote (i.e. the county ones) and the organization of the miners association has its head offices in Chesterfield." RP, MS 10115, f. 51, Markham to Rosebery dated August 18, 1901.

[243] RP, MS 10115, f. 51, Markham to Rosebery dated August 18, 1901.

[244] RP, MS 10131, p. 279, Rosebery to Markham [copy] dated August 22, 1901.

[245] RP, MS 10131, f. 283, Rosebery to Markham [copy] dated October 10, 1901.

in the hands of the friends of the member for Stirling."[246] Campbell-Bannerman was not prepared to relinquish the party leadership and fought hard to repel Rosebery's assaults.[247] The Scottish Liberal Association and the Young Scots (pro-Boer, pro-Scottish Home Rule and anti-Imperial Liberals) backed Campbell-Bannerman. Ironically, Rosebery had lost the leadership battle in Scotland to a fellow Scot. Imperialism and efficiency could not displace the classic Liberal platform of peace, retrenchment and reform. The battle between Rosebery and C-B resembled the Midlothian contests of old, but in this battle Rosebery represented the intransigent interests of property. As Brown noted, "If anyone had revived the echoes of Midlothian, it had been Campbell-Bannerman ... The benefits of empire no longer seemed worth the sacrifice, and the elite no longer commanded such confidence."[248] Scotland had changed: Rosebery had not.

Rosebery could draw an audience, but he could no longer move the party. In the 1870s and the 1880s when party organisation was new, a charismatic leader could exert great influence. However, the party machine had grown and acquired its own power. Before retaking the Foreign Office, Rosebery remarked to Lord Randolph Churchill,

> A statesman in 1892 must I suppose have a dash of the demagogue. He has to deal with three new conditions at least.
>
> A democratic constituency
>
> A powerful and penetrating press

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[246] The Times, February 24, 1902, p. 7.

[247] Gutzke convincingly argues for a reappraisal of Campbell-Bannerman. "C.-B. was, in fact, ambitious for the leadership, thus belying the guise presented to the party of a self-effacing, genial politician who invariably put the party before himself." in "Rosebery and Campbell-Bannerman: The Conflict over Leadership Reconsidered," p. 250.

[248] Brown, "'Echoes of Midlothian,'" p. 182. In addition, Brown [pp. 180 - 81] noted that despite the efforts of Rosebery and the other Liberal League leaders the League foundered first in Scotland and it folded in Scotland in 1906 while it survived in England until 1910.

A web of caucus.[249]

Rosebery did not adjust properly to these changing conditions. After Lord Randolph's death, Rosebery expanded on the power of the Party,

> The party "machine" ... is now so developed that no individual, however gifted, can fight against it. Peel twice and Disraeli once did, no doubt, when the party "machine" was comparatively feeble, pass measures against the will or conscience of their party. But Peel fell as his bill passed and Disraeli was too wary to repeat his own experiment. It is more than doubtful if either Peel or Disraeli ever attained the personal popularity of Randolph in 1885... Mr Disraeli once boasted that he had educated his party. But did not his party in truth educate Mr Disraeli?[250]

Rosebery failed to heed his own warnings. He tried to reshape the party - to replace entrenched Gladstonian views with a new Imperial ethos. He failed but he did try.

Stifled within the party, Rosebery formed an extra-party organisation, the Liberal League, on March 10, 1902. Rosebery was President and his chief lieutenants were Asquith, Grey(**), Haldane(**), Sir Henry Fowler(**) and Sir Robert Perks(**). In the press, E. T. Cook,[251] the Editor of the Daily News, "occupied the proud position of being the only person 'connected with the press' in whom Lord Rosebery had 'complete confidence.'"[252] During the initial months of the League, Rosebery also enjoyed the considerable backing

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[249] Lord Randolph Churchill MSS, non-foliated, arranged by correspondent in chronological order, Rosebery to Churchill dated January 20, 1892.

[250] Rosebery, Lord Randolph Churchill, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, p. 338. Rosebery composed these notes shortly after Churchill's death in 1895 and they appear in draft form in Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 42.

[251] Sir Edward T. Cook (1857 - 1919) was editor of the Pall Mall Gazette (1890 -92), the Westminster Gazette (1893 - 96) and the Daily News (1896 - 1901). He was strongly sympathetic to the Liberal Imperialists and to Rosebery personally.

[252] Raymond, p. 178. Cooper of The Scotsman had held this distinction during the 1880s.

of Alfred Harmsworth[253] and his Daily Mail. Rosebery had a platform and an audience. When Chamberlain split the Conservative party over his ill-fated 'Fair Trade' campaign in 1903, Rosebery's future still seemed limitless. Had he rejoined the party, Raymond believed "there would have been no budget of 1909, no constitutional struggle, nothing more than the normal Irish problem, only a very limited Lloyd George, and perhaps no great war."[254] Though hyperbolic, this illustrate the spell which Rosebery cast: nothing was impossible for him.

There was a growing urgency about Rosebery's speeches. In his journals, Rosebery made the following note about George Whitefield, "A preacher whenever he enters the pulpit should look upon it as the last time he may preach, and the last time his people may hear."[255] In a similar manner, Rosebery spoke as a dying man to dying men. Though he was earnest, he was in truth no closer to returning to politics than in 1896. The months after Chesterfield were the most opportune time to return. Campbell-Bannerman's leadership was weak and the public was war-weary. Rosebery was one step from reentering the fray, but that step was never taken. The reasons for this non-event are complex, but it is neither unfair nor unreasonable to suggest that Rosebery lost his nerve. His premiership was a disaster which he never wished to repeat. In retirement, he received public adulation and approbation - risking nothing and achieving nothing.

The Curtain Falls

But surely the best poetry is produced before middle age, before the

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[253] Alfred Harmsworth (1865 - 1922) founded the Daily Mail (1896) and the Daily Mirror (1903). He initially backed Rosebery's Liberal League but soon despaired of Rosebery as a viable leader. He was created Baron Northcliffe in 1905 and Viscount Northcliffe in 1918.

[254] Raymond, p. 204.

[255] Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 4, f. 420, n.d. Extract from Lecky's History of England, vol. ii.

> morning and its illusions have faded, before the heaviness of noon and the baleful cool of evening.[256]

At Stirling on November 23, 1905, as a General Election loomed near, Campbell-Bannerman announced his acceptance of a step-by-step policy towards Irish Home Rule which would culminate in a Dublin Parliament.[257] At Bodmin [Cornwall], on November 25th, 1905, Rosebery responded, "emphatically and explicitly and once for all, I cannot serve under that banner."[258] Campbell-Bannerman formed his Government on December 5th. The vice-presidents of the Liberal League, Asquith, Haldane, Grey, and Fowler were all given Cabinet positions while Rosebery languished in his lonely furrow. Bryce(**), who was bitterly opposed to Rosebery and his form of Liberalism, noted privately to C-B, "What a bombshell in a certain camp (not ours) is Barnbougle's [i.e. Rosebery] public repudiation of H. Rule. I think he is off his head."[259] Bryce was not far wrong.

In 1905, Rosebery lamented, "I acknowledge that I did not realise the strength of the party machine."[260] But it was too late: Rosebery's career had effectively ended. He was a political pariah. Using his own words, "He had missed the last opportunity, which neither forgives nor returns."[261] Though ostracised, he was not silent. His eulogy to Salisbury explains many of his later attacks on his old party,

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[256] Rosebery, "Robert Burns," Dumfries, July 21, 1896, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, p. 12.

[257] Campbell-Bannerman, "Speech at Stirling," November 23, 1905, in The Times, November 24, p.8.

[258] Rosebery, "Speech at Bodmin," November 25, 1905, in The Times, November 27, p. 4.

[259] John Wilson, CB: A Life of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (London, 1973), p. 430, a letter from Bryce to Campbell-Bannerman dated November 26, 1905.

[260] Rhodes James, p. 460.

[261] Rosebery, Lord Randolph Churchill, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, p. 310.

> I think you will find it to be true, that a man of high ideal and exalted standards is apt to reserve his chief bitterness of language for his own party, or to use it with more satisfaction than he does with regard to his opponents.[262]

Unable to control the party, Rosebery then turned his attentions to condemning the party system in general as being inimical to efficiency. In his forward to Alfred Stead's Great Japan, A Study of National Efficiency, Rosebery expressed the dangers of party loyalty,

> Its operation blights efficiency. It keeps out of employment a great many men of precious ability. It puts into place not the fittest, but the most eligible from the Party point of view - that is very often the worst. Efficiency implies the rule of the fittest. Party means the rule of something else - not of the unfittest, but of the few fit, the accidentally not unfit, and the glaringly unfit. I do not seek to abolish party. I recognize it as part of our moral climate; but we must ever bear in mind that when we aim at efficiency we shall be handicapped by this formidable encumbrance. We regard our Parties as interesting groups of gladiators. Our firmest faith seems to be that one will do worse than the other, so we maintain the other.[263]

Like his great grandfather 'Citizen Stanhope,' Rosebery grew cantankerous and stubborn. His petulance grew tiresome even to his allies. The great voice began to cloy rather than captivate, and his mercurial nature became more apparent.[264] In these later years, Gardiner portrayed a lonely

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[262] Rosebery, "Lord Salisbury," Oxford, November 14, 1904, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, p. 270.

[263] Rosebery's preface to Alfred Stead, Great Japan, A Study of National Efficiency (London, 1906), p. x. Again, Rosebery follows Macaulay who had warned, "The effect of violent animosities between parties has always been an indifference to the general welfare and honour of the State. A politician, where factions run high, is interested not for the whole people but for his section of it." Macaulay's essay on "Hallam" [Edinburgh Review, September, 1828] in Montague (ed.), Essays by Lord Macaulay, vol. i, p. 188.

[264] An unnamed Liberal Imperialist peer recounted the following incident. Rosebery "came down to the house this afternoon to support my motion and delivered an excellent speech. I met him in the lobby afterwards, stopped him, and thanked him for his support. He turned on his heel without a word and walked away." Gardiner, Prophets, p. 277.

figure,

> There he sits on the cross benches of the House of Lords, his head leaning back on his linked hands, his heavy lidded light blue eyes fixed in a curious impassive stare - a sphinx whose riddle no man can read ... A lonely man full of strange exits and entrances, incoherent, inexplicable, flashing out in passionate melodramatic utterances, disappearing into some remote fastness of his solitary self ... He is the flying dutchman of politics - a phantom vessel floating about on the wide seas, without an anchor and without a port. It is significant that his latest work should deal with 'the last phase' of Napoleon, for it is that solitary figure standing on the rock of St Helena and gazing over the sea at the setting sun of whom he most reminds us. Behind the far off murmur of the great world where he once was the hero, now lost to him for ever; before the waste of lonely waters and the engulfing night.[265]

Unlike Napoleon, Rosebery did not forge an Empire, making his lonely exile all the more pathetic. Rosebery became almost comical. In 1908, he again spoke about reforming the Lords,

> The House of Lords has pledged to reform themselves (laughter). Oh you may laugh. The peers have pledged to reform themselves - that which they have always refused to do hitherto. I do not know who the gentleman was who laughed at that. But I am the chairman of the committee [i.e. the Rosebery Commission] and I think I know more of it than he does; and I can say this, that I have found a spirit of earnestness and of anxiety for reform in that committee for which I on entering it had scarcely ventured to hope.(cheers)[266]

The audience was laughing in the wrong place. Even Rosebery's oratory was failing and his parliamentary skills were waning. Lord Newton, a member of the Rosebery Commission, noted,

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[265] Gardiner, Prophets, p. 283.

[266] Rosebery, "Address to the Liberal League," London, March 12, 1908, in The Times, March 13, p. 13.

> It must be admitted however that Lord Rosebery was less successful as a chairman than might have been anticipated, for he allowed the members to stray from the point under discussion, frequently made discursive if entertaining speeches himself, and conveyed the impression that he was physically unequal to the moderate strain of work involved. He was also liable to fits of discouragement.[267]

The Commission's report was published but it was never read nor discussed. Parliament hurtled towards a cataclysmic collision.

Following the introduction and subsequent rejection of the 'People's Budget' of 1909, a constitutional showdown ensued. Lloyd George(**) presented the government's case at Limehouse while Rosebery spoke for the opposition at Glasgow. Rosebery again disappointed his prospective Conservative allies by refusing to vote against the budget which he loathed.[268] Curzon accused Rosebery of "leading the army up to the walls of the fortress and then abandoning it."[269] Tim Healy(**) had earlier noted this characteristic,

> John Bright said to MacCarthy one day, "our friend [Rosebery] is a very well meaning fellow, I quite admit, but he is not exactly the sort of man to go tiger hunting with. Just at the moment when you and he are standing together, and the tiger is making for you, it might occur to him that there was a good deal to be said for the tiger's view of the case, and so he might happen out of pure conscientiousness to leave you alone with the tiger."[270]

The Parliament Act which emasculated the upper house was exactly

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[267] Roy Jenkins, Mr Balfour's Poodle (London, 1954), p. 92.

[268] Rosebery's name was absent from the final division list. [Hansard, 5th Ser., Lords, vol. 4, cols. 134 - 46, November 30, 1909.]

[269] Raymond, p. 222. Curzon was irritated by Rosebery's abstention from voting on the budget of 1909, which seemed incongruous after Rosebery's stinging denunciation of the budget in Glasgow.

[270] Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 5, f. 15, quoted from Justin MacCarthy's Reminiscences, vol. i, p. 180. Rhodes James [p. 258] attributes this remark to Healy.

the type of measure which he had laboured to forestall. He planned to abstain from voting, but at the last minute he supported the Government at the division: the Parliament Bill passed by 17 votes. He again perceived himself to be the lone saviour of the nation's honour. In a private letter to King George V, Rosebery explained his surprising action,

> When I returned to the house after dinner I was informed that there were 20 peers who would vote for the government if I said that I would. I should never have forgiven myself if I had abstained and if in consequence the large creation of peers had taken place.[271]

Nonetheless, he could no longer sit in such a vitiated assembly. Rosebery then made an extensive entry in the House of Lords protest book and never entered its chambers again.

Even his speeches, though still eloquent, began to sound like a like a phonograph needle stuck in one groove. Raymond's analogy gives a humorous insight into these years.

> The chorus in the Japanese classic drama generally consists of two men in boxes hung midway between ceiling and floor on opposite sides of the stage. They explain with an air of superior intelligence what is already sufficiently obvious to the most innocent play-goer, but invariably omit enlightenment of a really dubious point. When the action becomes tense they scream their comments in such a way to make it really difficult to give undivided attention to the stage ... Between 1906 and 1911 Lord Rosebery played somewhat the part of this chorus, showing what may be perhaps best described as a topical irrelevance. His interventions were perfectly timed, but essentially anachronistic. His comments had always a point, but were seldom to the point.[272]

Rosebery's obituary in The Times noted a trait evident throughout his

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[271] Quoted in Rhodes James, p. 470.

[272] Raymond, pp. 215 - 216.

life that became more pronounced as he grew old,

> He seemed to regard life before the world with a detachment amounting now and then almost to indifference, as if the prizes it had to offer were of little permanent value to him, and as if he found satisfaction in laying aside what others have abandoned all their pleasure to retain.[273]

After 1905 and particularly after 1911, Rosebery's detachment from both Party and Parliament was broad and growing.

Despite these debilities, Rosebery could still rally the nation. When hostilities erupted in 1914, Rosebery returned to the platform. His eloquence and charisma had not disappeared. Speaking of the cost of the war, "We walk through graves open on each side of us, and we do not know at any moment who may fill them, however near and dear they may be to us."[274] His favourite son, Neil, filled one of these graves when a stray bullet killed him in Palestine in 1917. This loss devastated Rosebery and seemed to herald his own demise. When the armistice was signed on November 11, 1918 crowds in Edinburgh gathered to hear a few words from their elder statesman, but the call went unheard; Rosebery lay unconscious after suffering a stroke. The great voice was hushed.

In these last years, Rosebery was a living anachronism: a Victorian in the Lost Generation. "He was a child of his age, and his age has passed away."[275] Apart from a few controversies waged by way of Letters to the

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[273] The Times, May 22, 1929, p. 17.

[274] Rosebery, "Speech at Juniper Green," September 22, 1914, in War! A Fight to the Finish, p. 20.

[275] The Times, May 22, 1929, p. 17.

Editor,[276] Rosebery remained quiet during the 1920s. An endearing glimpse of Rosebery in 1921 remains in a yellowed clipping,

> In the spring evenings Lord Rosebery who is 74, drives out in search of the song of the Nightingale, and when from some copse or thicket the silver notes of the bird are heard pouring out in a rapturous melody the carriage stops and the elderly peer sits and listens in delight to the song enchanting the still night.[277]

[276] He battled the Ministry of Munitions over its plan to sell his Turnhouse farm, attacked the Duke of Atholl over the War Memorial at Edinburgh Castle and castigated Lloyd George over his financial irregularities.

[277] Clippings from Lord Rosebery's Speeches [A Scrapbook] NLS Shelf-mark x.171.a, not paginated, "Night drives to hear the Nightingale," n.d. [1921].

4. Nationalism in the United Kingdom

Before proceeding to the more detailed study of Rosebery's response to Scottish, Irish and Welsh nationalism in chapters 5 and 6, I will provide a brief overview of national movements in the United Kingdom. The history and self-perception of each nation within the British Isles shaped and defined its nationalism. Briefly, this chapter explores the study of nationalism in general with a brief synopsis of Irish, Welsh and Scottish national movements during the late 19th century. The discussion of Scottish Home Rule and Scottish Disestablishment is reserved for chapter 5.

Nationalism - An Overview

To provide some parameters for discussion, The Oxford English Dictionary defines nationalism as, "devotion to one's nation, national aspiration; a policy of national independence."[1] Nationalism needs to be understood in broad terms. A desire for independence is one form of nationalism, but it is not a *sine qua non*.[2] Nationalism varies according to time, geography, and circumstance. The Irish, Scots and Welsh, each expressed their national demands, but their methods and aims differed significantly.

Two classic definitions of nationalism are provided by Ernest Gellner and Elie Kedourie.[3] Gellner asserts,

Nationalism is primarily a political principle which holds that the

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[1] The Oxford English Dictionary, (2nd ed., 20 vols., Oxford, 1989), vol x.

[2] Ernest Gellner [Thought and Change (London, 1964), p. 177] suggests that struggles to achieve full citizenship in an existing political unit as an alternative to nationalism rather than a form of it, but this distinction is too rigid.

[3] I am grateful to Mr Tom Nairn of the University of Edinburgh, who, when asked, directed me to these works on nationalism.

> political and the national unit should be congruent. Nationalist sentiment is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of this principle or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfilment.[4]

While Kedourie suggests,

> Nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It pretends to supply a criterion for the determination of the unit of population proper to enjoy a government exclusively its own, for the legitimate exercise of power in the state, and for the right organisation of a society of states.[5]

Both definitions are insufficient for our purposes. Firstly, they fail to mention a key element to Scottish and Irish nationalism, namely a sense of the past. Reading Aytoun's Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers - one of Rosebery's favourite books - the romantic and nostalgic view of Scotland's glorious and bloody history is moving and compelling. Nationalism is an emotive force, it may be intermittent and variable but it stirs people: it fuels the emotion and drives the imagination. Gellner and Kedourie fail to recognise this key element which Gladstone, Rosebery and Parnell understood. Rosebery had a keen knowledge of Scotland's past which he used effectively. Secondly, both definitions suggest that the aim of national expressions should be independence, whereas in the 19th century, Scotland, Wales and Ireland (somewhat) eschewed independence in favour of an improved relationship within the United Kingdom. This certainly does not imply that nationalism was absent. Using McCrone's phrase, Ireland, Scotland and Wales were 'Stateless Nations.'[6] Though 'stateless' each nation had national ambitions.

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[4] Ernest Gellner, Nations and Nationalism (Oxford, 1983), p. 1.

[5] Elie Kedourie, Nationalism (4th ed., Oxford, 1993), p. 1.

[6] Modern Scotland, according to McCrone, demonstrated that "the correspondence between states, societies and nations is no longer clear-cut." David McCrone, Understanding Scotland: The Sociology of a Stateless Nation (London, 1992), p. 10. See his chapter, "What is Scotland," pp. 16 - 31, for a further discussion of this distinction.

Nationalism, however, is neither inevitable nor consistent. Rosebery accurately described the limitations of Scottish Nationalism, "the feeling in Scotland seems sometimes unexpectedly fierce and sometimes unexpectedly dormant. I do not know that it is in any danger of extinction. It is probably more subject to misapplication."[7] From the days of William Wallace and Robert Bruce, Scotland's national awareness has remained like a glowing ember - never fully extinguished - but rarely fanned into a full flame. This raises a key question, why did Scotland persistently and vocally assert her national claims during the closing decades of the 19th century? One answer is that she had a national leader of Imperial importance, who appealed to the romantic heritage of the past and addressed current problems.

This underlines the point that leadership is essential. As Hans Kohn noted, national movements, "found their spokesmen in national prophets who became the voice and conscience of their people, interpreting its history or mission and shaping its character and personality."[8] In O'Connell and Parnell, Ireland had two unrivalled charismatic national leaders. Yet, this was not the case with Wales (prior to Lloyd George) and Scotland (prior to Rosebery) which partially explains the relative vibrancy of Irish nationalism.

Before proceeding, some precautions are necessary. In 1931, Herbert Butterfield warned against adopting the Whig view of history in which civilisation consistently moved onwards and upwards, "The truth of history is no simple matter, all packed and parcelled ready for handling in the marketplace. And the understanding of the past is not so easy as it is sometimes made to appear."[9] In such a framework, a historian "very quickly

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[7] Rosebery, "Edinburgh Rectorial Address," November 4, 1882, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 110.

[8] Hans Kohn, Prophets and Peoples: Studies in Nineteenth Century Nationalism (New York, 1947), p. 2.

[9] Herbert Butterfield, The Whig Interpretation of History (London, 1931), p. 132.

busies himself with dividing the world into the friends and enemies of progress."[10] These warnings are appropriate for studying nationalism especially in Ireland and Scotland, because viewing "the past with one eye so to speak upon the present is the source of all sins and sophistries in history."[11]

The discovery of North Sea oil, the breakthrough of the SNP in the 1974 General Elections, and the 1979 Devolution Referendum combined to make nationalism a volatile issue in contemporary Scottish politics. Historians quickly sought to explain this resurgent nationalism.[12] While this heightened interest has given greater depth to the study of modern Scotland, an alarm needs to be sounded, lest Scottish history be distilled into a simple clash between nationalism and unionism. Concerning nationalism, Minogue warns that "the study of the ideology has been infected by the ideology."[13] The study of Scottish history is not immune from this infection, and there can be a tendency to view Scotland's history through nationalist 'spectacles' or in terms of nationalist struggles.[14] For example, Webb noted, "modern [Scottish] nationalism is part of a continuing historical process the origins of which are lost in prehistory"[15] and asserted that a separate national identity has existed

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[10] Butterfield, p. 5.

[11] Butterfield, p. 31.

[12] The most valuable studies are, in chronological order, James G. Kellas, Modern Scotland, The Nation Since 1870 (London, 1968), H. J. Hanham, Scottish Nationalism (London, 1969), Jack Brand, The National Movement in Scotland (London, 1976), Christopher Harvie, Scotland and Nationalism Scottish Society and Politics (London, 1977 [2nd ed., London, 1994]), Keith Webb, The Growth of Nationalism in Scotland (Glasgow, 1977) and Michael Fry, Patronage and Principle (Aberdeen, 1987).

[13] Kenneth Minogue Nationalism (London, 1967), p. 25.

[14] An extreme assertion is made by Prudhomme in his dissertation, "The existence of a diffuse Scottish nationalism, whether dormant or hyperactive, over a period of one or two thousand years." G. Prudhomme, La Renaissance du Nationalisme Eccosais au XXe Siecle, 1844 - 1928 (Sorbonne, Ph.D, 4 vols., 1991), p. 1 of the English abstract [NLS Acc. 10507/8].

[15] Webb, The Growth of Nationalism in Scotland, p. 25.

since Roman times.[16] Such an extrapolation is attractive to modern nationalists but it is incapable of being authenticated or substantiated historically.

Another caveat is that nationalism must understood in its own historical context. To view 19th century-nationalism by 20th century-standards is deceptive, false, and ultimately pointless. To this end, Minogue's Nationalism is useful. He categorizes and analyzes national movements according to a three-stage process, which includes stirrings, struggle for independence and consolidation.[17] Scottish, Welsh and Irish nationalism contained varying degrees of stirring. Independence was not sought, but the *status quo* was not accepted. These stirrings took many forms, but generally the nations demanded increased local autonomy; i.e. devolution. According to Bogdanor, "Devolution involves the creation of an elected body, subordinate to Parliament; it therefore seeks to preserve intact the supremacy of Parliament, a central feature of the British constitution."[18] Devolution, I contend, was a legitimate nationalistic aspiration even though it rejected the modern bench-mark of nationalism: namely independence. Home Rule was but one form of devolution, but it had great ramifications first in Ireland and subsequently in Scotland and Wales.

Ireland (1845 - 1916)

> Nationality supplies the greatest strength, I think, to the Irish demand: because 1. It was self-governed (1782-1800). 2. The self-government

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[16] Webb probably dates this separate consciousness to A.D. 79 - 83, the years of Agricola's campaigns in Scotland [recorded by Tacitus]. For a brief discussion of 'Roman' Scotland see Michael Lynch, Scotland: A New History (Paperback rev. ed., London, 1992), pp. 3 - 10.

[17] Minogue, pp. 26 - 31.

[18] Vernon Bogdanor, Devolution (Oxford, 1979), p. 2. Bogdanor drew a sharp distinction between devolution and federalism "which would divide supreme power between Parliament and various provincial bodies." But in practice, terms such as devolution, decentralisation, and federalism were used quite loosely especially by Gladstone and Rosebery.

> was stolen from it - by fraud and force. 3. It has never in any way condoned the crime.[19]

Though Wales and Scotland had grievances, Ireland was different. Gladstone noted one important distinction, "the mainspring of law in Scotland is felt by the people to be Scotch; but the mainspring of the law in Ireland is not felt by the people to be Irish."[20] Ireland's native government, laws, and church were suppressed and English substitutes were transplanted and imposed. Irish nationalism arose due to injustice and was fuelled by repression, while Scottish nationalism grew from neglect and was nurtured by ignorance and inefficiency.

Expressions of Irish nationalism were more extreme and engendered a fear which many considered insurmountable.[21] In the 1860s, a small band of incendiaries under the banner of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) sought to free Eire from British rule. In 1866 and 1867, rebellion engulfed Ireland. Repression soon followed. This upheaval created a lingering fear that Irish Nationalists would overthrow the established order. This fear persisted long after the rebellion was quelled. Parnell's enigmatic pronouncements did little to quell these fears,

> No man has the right to fix the boundary to the march of a nation. No man has the right to say to his country, "thus far shalt thou go and no further." We have never attempted to fix the *ne plus ultra* to the progress of Ireland's nationhood and we

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[19] The Gladstone Diaries, vol. xi, p. 607, Gladstone to Sir T. D. Acland dated August 23, 1886. Gladstone does not consider that the nation ("it") may have changed in the intervening 86 years.

[20] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 304, col. 1044, April 8, 1886.

[21] These connotations had wider implications, as William Mitchell, a propagandist of the Scottish Home Rule Association noted, "The constitutional career of the Irish Home Rule party has been marred by dynamite and murder on the part of illtrained and ignorant camp-followers; and their misdeeds and the continual troubles caused by boycotting and plans of campaign and their attendant crimes have caused Home Rule to stink in the nostrils of many English people." Mitchell, Is Scotland to Be Sold Again? (SHRA, [1893]), p. 6.

never shall.[22]

Following the Second Reform Act (1867), the Irish raised their voice in Westminster and thenceforward they were never silent. Under the leadership of Isaac Butt(**), the Irish sought conciliation through cooperation: expressing Ireland's needs without challenging the existing framework. By the end of the 1870s, Butt no longer spoke for the party. The indifference of the Beaconsfield Government to Irish concerns led Joseph Biggar(**) and Charles Stewart Parnell,[23] the newly-elected member for Meath, to commence a campaign of obstruction.[24] As a patrician Protestant landowner, Parnell was an unlikely leader of a nationalist and agrarian movement, but he quickly rose from obscurity to make Irish nationalism a potent force in British politics.

With regard to Home Rule, some attention should be given to examining this term which encapsulated Irish demands for the next generation. 'Home Rule!' was first heard as a rallying cry in the American south during the closing years of reconstruction but in Ireland, it was Parnell's vision of a Home Rule Parliament - subordinate to Westminster - which gained currency.[25] The Irish defined the parameters of Home Rule.

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[22] Parnell, "Speech at Cork," January 24, 1885 quoted in F. S. L. Lyons, "Political Ideas of Parnell," The Historical Journal, xvi (1974), p. 764. This statement adorns Parnell's statue on O'Connell Street in Dublin.

[23] The finest contemporary biography of Parnell is R. Barry O'Brien, The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell, 1846 - 1891 (2 vols., London, 1898). The best recent studies are F. S. L. Lyons, Charles Stewart Parnell (London, 1977), and Robert Kee, The Laurel and the Ivy: The Story of Charles Stewart Parnell and Irish Nationalism (London, 1993).

[24] Parnell noted in 1878, "Englishmen will not give me an opportunity of concerning myself about the affairs of my own country, and I mean to concern myself about the affairs of their country," in Barry O'Brien, Life of Parnell, vol. i, p. 173.

[25] The common comparison to the Independent Irish Parliament (1782 - 1800) - misnamed Grattan's Parliament - is faulty. Firstly, the Independent Irish Parliament was completely restricted to Protestants. Secondly, it operated independently alongside Westminster rather than as a subordinate Parliament under Westminster's control.

Later movements in Wales and Scotland had to contend with their definition.[26] Home Rule was the tamest of all Irish demands in the 19th century, far less radical than the repeal campaign of O'Connell or the republicanism of the Fenians. At its core, it upheld Ireland's connection to the United Kingdom and the Empire, but its detractors quickly fashioned a rhyme which summed up a pervasive fear - "Home Rule means Rome Rule."

No discussion of Irish nationalism in the Victorian Age can exclude the Grand Old Man. Gladstone earnestly contended, "Yes, I believe that God has designed that I shall be the saviour of Ireland."[27] From 1868 to 1894, Gladstone "spent his declining years trying to guess the answer to the Irish Question; unfortunately, whenever he was getting warm, the Irish secretly changed the question."[28] Gladstone's first attempts included disestablishing the Church of Ireland, reforming the land system, and expanding the Irish educational system. Yet these measures were insufficient; a more radical solution was needed.

On April 8, 1886, Gladstone introduced the Government of Ireland Bill.[29] Gladstone was either a Moses leading a captive people to the

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[26] Throughout this thesis the phrase Home Rule will be used to designate the movements in Ireland, Scotland and Wales to secure a subordinate parliament to deal with exclusively local issues. However, 'Home Rule' was used broadly by both advocates and adversaries to denote any form of devolution or decentralisation within the United Kingdom. Rosebery was far less precise than Gladstone. After 1886, when Gladstone spoke of Irish Home Rule it was in the context of a Dublin Parliament. Rosebery's intentions were not nearly as straightforward.

[27] Conversation with Lord Southesk in April, 1886. When Gladstone spoke these words, he "raised his eyes to heaven, with almost a rapt look in them" in Horatio Gordon Hutchinson, Portraits of the Eighties (London, [1920]), p. 10.

[28] Walter Carruthers Sellar and Robert Julian Yeatman, 1066 and All That: A Memorable History of England (London, 1932), p. 108.

[29] On the title-page of his pamphlet The Irish Question (London, 1886), Gladstone defended his action with a verse from the Gospel of Mark, "When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." Mark, chapter 4, verse 29 (Authorized Version). By 1886, Irish Home Rule seemed to Gladstone to be ripe for harvest.

promised land,[30] or a Dr Faustus trading his eternal soul for earthly glory.[31] The Liberal Party lost Hartington and Chamberlain, while the previously independent Irish Nationalist Party linked its destiny with the Liberals. The bill was poorly drafted and completely excluded the Irish from Westminster while vaguely establishing a parliament in Dublin. Based on this loosely-cobbled bill, it is difficult to believe that Gladstone expected Home Rule to pass. After the bill was rejected in the Commons, six years of opposition ensued.

In 1890, Parnell's long affair with Katharine O'Shea was exposed. Gladstone's threat to end the Liberal-Irish alliance sealed Parnell's fate. The uncrowned king fell from power, causing a bitter rift in the Irish Party. At the end of 1890, Gladstone vented his despair, "For the past five years I have rolled this stone patiently uphill, and it has now rolled to the bottom again, and I am eighty one years old."[32] By the end of 1891, Parnell was dead, Gladstone was 82 and the Irish party was in disarray. John Redmond(**) led the Parnellite faction, while Justin MacCarthy(**) was the figure-head leader of the anti-Parnellites. The anti-Parnellites were clearly in the majority both in terms of supporters and leaders: John Dillon(**), William O'Brien(**), and Tim Healy had all broken with their late chief.[33] Anti-Parnellites remained wedded to the Liberal alliance, while the Parnellites rejected all political alliances.

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[30] After Gladstone's retirement from the premiership, Rosebery paid him the following glowing tribute, "One cannot, it seems to me, help being reminded of some noble river that has gathered its colours from the various soils though which it has passed, but has preserved its identity unimpaired and gathered itself in one splendid volume before it breasts the eternal sea." Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 22, col. 26, March 12, 1894.

[31] The most famous revisionist portrait of Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule appears in A. B. Cooke and John Vincent, The Governing Passion (Brighton, 1974).

[32] Maurice V. Brett (ed.), Journals and Letters of Reginald Viscount Esher (4 vols., London, 1934 - 38), vol. i, p. 148, journal entry for December 13, 1890.

[33] At the 1892 General Election, 9 Parnellites and 71 anti-Parnellites were returned.

Despite these drawbacks, Gladstone returned to power in 1892 and in the following year, he introduced his second Home Rule Bill which retained Irish members at Westminster. The 1893 - 94 session was the longest in Parliament's history and Gladstone's performance was matchless. His dedication to Home Rule was unquestionable. The Government was in danger of falling any day and on several critical divisions its majority slipped below thirty.[34] The bill passed its third reading by a margin of 347 to 304. The House of Lords, after a brief debate, threw out the product of 82 sessions in the Commons by an unprecedented vote of 419 to 40.[35] Gladstone's mission to pacify Ireland had ended; the Irish Question remained unsolved.

From 1890 until the Liberals returned to power in 1905, the Irish party underwent divisions, reunions and redivisions, while the Salisbury and Balfour Governments were engaged in "killing Home Rule with kindness."[36] The Land Act of 1896, the Local Government Act of 1898 and the Wyndham Land Act of 1903 expanded Irish self-government and boosted the material prosperity of the Irish people. Yet, Home Rule was not killed: the demand for a Dublin Parliament remained. In 1900, the Irish party was reunited under John Redmond, who restated the party's commitment to Home Rule. William O'Brien who stood to the right of Redmond in the 1890s, wrote in 1910 (when he was to Redmond's left) that the party leader,

> Who was constitutionally an Irish Nationalist of the most moderate type, threw out hints and vague demands which alarmed a good many

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[34] John Morley, The Life of William Ewart Gladstone (3 vols., London, 1903), vol. iii, p. 504.

[35] J. L. Hammond noted the noble futility of the proceedings, "no triumph of argument however brilliant or of oratory however magnificent could avert the certain destruction of the bill in the Lords. The whole of those proceedings were, it was well known, the prelude to prompt and contemptuous rejection." in Gladstone and the Irish Nation (2nd ed., Hamden, Connecticut, 1964), p. 691.

[36] This phrase was coined by Gerald Balfour (1853 - 1945), the Chief Secretary for Ireland (1895 - 1900). For Unionist policy towards Ireland, see Andrew Gailey, Ireland and the Death of Kindness: The Experience of Constructive Unionism 1890 - 1905 (Cork, 1987).

> honest but uninformed Britons, and gave the Whiggish section of the Liberal party a possible pretext for separating themselves from what they nicknamed 'Fenian Home Rule.'[37]

One of the Whigs most concerned by these outbursts was Rosebery.

Prior to forming his Government in 1905, Campbell-Bannerman met with Redmond, who left the following record,

> Breakfasted with CB (TP O'C[38] also there) at 29 Belgrave Square 14 November 1905. He sd he was stronger than ever for Home Rule: It was only a question how far they cd go in the next parlmnt. His own impression was it wd. not be possible to pass full Home Rule, but he hoped to be able to pass some serious measure wh. wd. be consistent with & wd. lead up to the other. He wd. say nothing, however, to withdraw the larger measure from the Electors ... He did not mind the Rosebery crowd & felt quite independent of them.[39]

Most Liberals and Irish Nationalists could stand together under this standard, but Rosebery would not. Redmond's reference to "the Rosebery crowd" is significant. He probably referred not only to the small coterie of Roseberyites like Munro-Ferguson and Sir Robert Perks, but also the more powerful figures in the Liberal League such as Grey, Asquith and Haldane. It was a common error to assume that Rosebery's following was greater and more loyal than it actually was. After 1905, Rosebery's weakness and isolation were obvious.

Nationalism in Ireland was not geographically constant. Ulster Protestants - or more accurately Presbyterians - feared that a Dublin Parliament, dominated by Roman Catholics, would imperil industry in the North-East. British politicians were not averse to playing 'the Orange Card'

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[37] William O'Brien, An Olive Branch in Ireland and Its History (London, 1910), p. 69.

[38] i. e. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and T. P. O'Connor.

[39] John Wilson, CB: A Life of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (London, 1973), p. 111.

inciting Unionists with little concern for actually solving the Irish Question. In 1887 Lord Randolph Churchill declared that "Ulster will fight; Ulster will be right."[40] Later, F. E. Smith and Edward Carson provided variations on this theme to large Unionist gatherings in Ulster. For some Unionists, if Home Rule became a reality, the only alternative was partition. Rosebery identified this inconsistency in 1892, "the main backers of unionism as interpreted by Lord Salisbury are to split Ireland up into two parts and that is a definition of the 'union' which hardly accords with that to be found in Johnson's dictionary."[41] In the years preceding the First World War, tension in Ulster was high and the threat of violence and rebellion was real, but the threats were strongest not from the Nationalists but from the Ulster Unionists. The authors of 1066 and All That remarked, "these Blood-Orangemen are still there; they are ... extremely fierce and industrial and so loyal that they are always ready to start a loyal rebellion to the Glory of God and the Orange."[42]

Despite these ominous rumblings, Asquith introduced another Home Rule measure in 1912.[43] Irish nationalism was remarkably patient and persistent. Twenty six years separated Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill and Asquith's Home Rule Bill. After three successive attempts, Irish Home Rule was placed on the statute book in 1914, but due to the unrest in Ulster and the First World War, it was suspended until the cessation of hostilities. The Easter Rising of 1916 closed the chapter in which Ireland sought redress through parliamentary means. A group of extreme men under the banner of Sinn Fein took matters out of Westminster and into the streets of Dublin.

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[40] R. F. Foster, Lord Randolph Churchill: A Political Life (Oxford Paperback ed., Oxford, 1988), p. 258, from Churchill's public letter dated May 7, 1886.

[41] Rosebery, "Speech at Birmingham," May 26, 1892, in The Times, May 27, p. 10.

[42] Walter Carruthers Sellar and Robert Julian Yeatman, 1066 and All That: A Memorable History of England (London, 1932), p. 76.

[43] After the General Elections of 1910, Irish votes were essential to Asquith's Government. In exchange for supporting the Government's Parliament Bill, the Irish were guaranteed a new Home Rule Bill.

Though Home Rule was ultimately frustrated, Irish nationalism transformed British politics and inspired national movements in Scotland and Wales. Gladstone commented in 1886,

> The sense of nationality, both in Scotland and in Wales, set astir by this controversy, may take a wider range than here-to-fore. Wales, and even Scotland, may ask herself, whether the present system of intrusting all their affairs to the handling of a body, English in such overwhelming a proportion is an adjustment which does the fullest justice to what is separate and specific in their several populations. ... [Secondly,] the desire for Federation floating in the minds of many has had an unexpected ally in the Irish policy of 1886.[44]

Wales (1868 - 1920)

Discontent with Westminster was not exclusively an Irish phenomenon. Scotland and Wales were increasingly frustrated by neglect and insensitivity at the hands of Parliament. The Celtic nations could obstruct legislation, but power was firmly in English hands.[45] In contrast to Scotland which was united with England, Wales was annexed to England by the Acts of Union of 1536 to 1543. From that point, all Welshmen enjoyed the same rights as Englishmen,[46] but Wales did not retain her institutions. English laws and the English Church were forced upon the Welsh people. From 1868, Wales began to demand attention for her distinct religious, cultural and political identity. Welsh national sentiment found expression in movements to secure disestablishment and Home Rule.

While the Irish were largely Roman Catholic and the Scots,

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[44] Gladstone, The Irish Question, pp. 36 - 37.

[45] Following the 1884 Reform Act, England had 456 seats, Ireland 101, Scotland 70, Wales 34 and the Universities 9 [2 of which represented the four ancient Scottish Universities].

[46] Gareth Elwyn Jones, Modern Wales: A Concise History, c. 1485 - 1979 (Cambridge, 1984), p. 55.

Presbyterian, the Welsh were vibrant Nonconformists.[47] The three largest Nonconformist denominations were the Calvinistic Methodists, Independents and Baptists. The gap between the established church and the dissenting churches was theological and linguistic. The Nonconformist churches preserved the Welsh language. By contrast, from 1716 to 1870, there was no Welsh-speaking bishop in the established church.[48] The Welsh resented paying tithes to a church which was perceived to be English and unsympathetic. Basil Jones, the Bishop of St David's, was not helpful when he remarked that Wales was little more than a "geographical expression."[49]

The population and political power of Wales were small. The 1881 census showed a total population of approximately 1,570,000 (including Monmouthshire) out of a combined population for the United Kingdom of almost 35,000,000 people.[50] Wales returned 30 members of Parliament and the Third Reform Act increased this number to 34. The Welsh voice in government was made even feebler by her representatives. Stuart Rendel(**), the future Welsh Liberal leader, described the Welsh members as "almost an inferior category, a cheaper sort of member."[51] By the 1880s, Welsh members were neither inferior nor insignificant.

Welsh national interest was sparked by the General Election of 1868 and the advent of Gladstone to the premiership. As Morgan noted,

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[47] The use of this term is difficult to avoid. Nonconformity in England was the faith of the minority, whilst Nonconformity in Wales was the rule rather than the exception.

[48] Jones, Modern Wales, pp. 273 and 127.

[49] Jones, Modern Wales, p. 276. This is an adaptation of Metternich's remark in 1815 that Italy was merely a "geographical expression."

[50] Accounts and Papers, "Census of England and Wales, Census of Scotland, Census of Ireland," 1881, vol. xcvi, p. xi. By comparison, the figures for England were 24,397,000 (including greater London, 3,815,000), Scotland 3,734,370, and Ireland, 5,160,000.

[51] Kenneth O. Morgan, Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880 - 1980 (Oxford, 1981), p. 26.

> The decades following the 'great election' of 1868 have come to be regarded since as a kind of national awakening in Wales, a political and indeed a cultural renaissance, a rekindling of the flame of national consciousness after centuries of isolation and neglect.[52]

An English Anglican, Rendel was an unlikely leader of a Welsh Nonconformist party.[53] Yet,

> It was he who was primarily the creator of a distinct Welsh party in the Commons, and the creator of its programme. With his charm, his tact, and his wide connections (particularly his friendship with Gladstone himself), Rendel was to do more than any other man to make Wales a force in political life.[54]

Like Rosebery, Rendel at first inspired Welsh Liberalism, only to find himself later trying to restrain Liberal extremists.[55]

The most significant progressive Welsh Liberals were Tom Ellis, who in 1894 became Rosebery's Chief Whip, and David Lloyd George. Ellis, a close friend of Rosebery, "formulated a new concept of nationhood, in which the history, traditions, social culture, literature, and political institutions of his people would be organically linked."[56] Ellis and Rendel agreed that Wales should work within the Liberal party, whereas Lloyd George pursued independent action, often at the expense of the Liberal party. Welsh

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[52] Kenneth O. Morgan, Wales in British Politics 1868-1922 (Cardiff, 1963), p. v.

[53] For more details see Grahame V. Nelmes, "Stuart Rendel and Welsh Liberal Political Organisation in the Late-Nineteenth Century," The Welsh History Review, vol. ix (1979), 468 - 485.

[54] Morgan, Wales in British Politics, p. 40.

[55] Rendel refused "to promote an idea which might lead Liberalism into nationalism or separatism. But the rising tide of national sentiment now led him to see the necessity for a Welsh parliamentary organization if only to forestall the most extreme nationalism of *Cymru Fydd*." Morgan, Rebirth of a Nation, p. 32. *Cymru Fydd* or Young Wales was the nationalist organisation led by Lloyd George.

[56] Morgan, Rebirth of a Nation, p. 113.

Disestablishment and Welsh Home Rule were both manifestations of national sentiment, but they caused Welsh nationalists to divide their strength rather than unite their efforts.

Welsh Disestablishment

The central plank of Welsh Radicalism was the disestablishment of the Church of England in Wales. As Ellis maintained, "It was the Nonconformity of Wales that created the unity of Wales, rather than any spontaneous demand for Home Rule."[57] Given the religious composition of Wales, Disestablishment was not only a Radical measure, it was a manifestation of Welsh nationalism. The established church clearly represented only a minority: as an establishment it was anachronistic. Welsh Radicals concentrated their efforts on lobbying the National Liberal Federation (NLF) directly[58] and succeeded in placing Welsh Disestablishment second on the Newcastle Programme behind Irish Home Rule. Consequently, the Gladstone/Rosebery Governments of 1892 - 1895 drafted two measures for Welsh Disestablishment (Scottish Disestablishment only merited a private member's bill).

The best gauge of the strength of the Disestablishment movement was its perseverance. Unlike other Welsh demands, Welsh Disestablishment did not die. After a hiatus of twelve years, the Commons passed a Disestablishment Bill during three consecutive sessions from 1912 to 1914. Before it was enacted, it was suspended until the end of the war. In 1919, following the Armistice, the major parties together passed the Welsh Church Temporalities Bill which divided the property and revenue of the established

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[57] Bogdanor, Devolution, p. 121.

[58] The Scots, however, focused on converting the Scottish Liberal Association rather than the National Liberal Federation. Kellas, "The Liberal Party in Scotland 1876 - 1895," pp. 14 - 5.

church. On March 31, 1920, the Church in Wales was disestablished. Victory had a cost, "national claims had been focused upon the limited aim of disestablishment and when that was achieved in 1920 the movement faded, and Welsh Liberalism lost its vitality."[59]

Welsh Home Rule

Though it never secured as widespread and consistent support as Welsh Disestablishment, Welsh Home Rule was an important expression of national demands. Welsh Home Rule can not be viewed in isolation. In 1871, while discussing Ireland, Gladstone pleaded the Welsh case - lest it be ignored,

> If doctrines of Home Rule are to be established in Ireland, I protest on your behalf that you will be just as well entitled to it in Scotland, and, moreover, I protest on behalf of Wales, in which I live a good deal, and where there are 800,000 people who to this day, such is their sentiment of nationality, speak hardly anything except their own Celtic tongue ... that it will be entitled to Home Rule also.[60]

His home in Hawarden on the Welsh border and his friendship with Rendel made him sensitive to Welsh concerns.[61] Gladstone realised the strength of Welsh national sentiment and the ways in which it can be expressed. Gladstone appointed a Welsh-speaking bishop to St Asaph in 1870 and to Llandaff in 1882.[62] In 1881, Gladstone's Government passed the Welsh

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[59] Bogdanor, Devolution, p. 124.

[60] Gladstone, "Speech at Aberdeen," September 26, 1871, in The Times, September 27, p. 6. Portions of this speech deemed sympathetic to Scottish Home Rule were republished in a two-page handbill by the Scottish Home Rule Association under the title, Excerpts from Speech delivered by the Right Hon. Wm. Ewart Gladstone M.P. in Aberdeen on 26 September 1871 (SHRA, [1891]).

[61] Morgan asserted convincingly, "No statesman did more to advance the [Welsh] cause than Gladstone himself," in "Gladstone and Wales," The Welsh History Review, vol. i (1960), p. 80.

[62] Morgan, Rebirth of a Nation, p. 93.

Sunday Closing Act - the first piece of legislation, since the Acts of Union which applied to Wales alone - recognizing its separate existence and distinct political agenda.

The division between the rural, Welsh-speaking, north and the industrialised, English-speaking south were manifested in Welsh nationalism. The north was more nationalistic and separatist while the south saw its future firmly within the Liberal Party and Britain. For example, the *Cymru Fydd* (Young Wales) League (founded in 1886) was based almost exclusively in northern Wales. The League originally emphasised Welsh culture and literature but, by 1890, it had shifted its focus to Welsh Home Rule. Within Welsh Liberalism, a wedge was driven between the *Cymru Fydd* League under the leadership of Lloyd George and the South Wales Liberal Federation under D. A. Thomas(**).[63] Rendel and Ellis came to dread the *Cymru Fydd* League because it "pressed on beyond purely cultural concerns and seemed likely to challenge, and even to capture the formal machinery of the Liberal Party in the Principality."[64]

In April 1895, the North Wales Liberal Federation merged with the *Cymru Fydd* League. In January 1896, at a meeting in Newport of the South Wales Liberal Federation, Lloyd George attempted to unite the entire party behind *Cymru Fydd*. Liberals in the south balked and the meeting was a disaster.[65] Consequently, Morgan noted,

> Welsh Liberalism underwent a slow, reluctant, and unwelcome self-analysis. It had reached the parting of the ways. At Westminster as in Wales itself, attention turned away from the seductive vision of home rule and 'revolt.' Instead, there returned the old radical programme of religious equality in all its aspects, gradually shedding

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[63] Morgan, Rebirth of a Nation, pp. 114 - 116.

[64] Ibid, p. 119.

[65] Ibid, p. 44.

its nationalist pretensions.[66]

County and parish councils enabled Liberals to undermine the power of the landed gentry without a Welsh Parliament.

Though Welsh Home Rule proved abortive, other national victories were secured. The Eisteddfod was reorganised in 1880 - 81. Attending the 1888 Eisteddfod in Wrexham, Gladstone noted that it "provided a powerful stimulus for the literature and cultural identity of Wales."[67] In 1883 - 84, university colleges were founded in Bangor and Cardiff and along with the college in Aberystwyth were combined in 1893 to form the University of Wales. The year 1905 marked the founding of the National Library of Wales and the National Museum. As Morgan noted,

> In Wales, unlike Ireland, the supreme objective was equality not exclusion - equality within the framework of the United Kingdom and the Empire, recognition of the distinct social and cultural needs of Wales without disturbing the overall governmental system, let alone breaking away from it.[68]

In the closing decades of the 19th century, Wales expressed her national agenda in political, religious, and cultural terms and secured a significant measure of success. Separatism was shunned. Welsh Home Rule fell as a casualty to the internal divisions in the Principality, rather than to a concerted intransigence by Westminster.[69] Nonetheless, these national

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[66] Morgan, Wales in British Politics, p. 165.

[67] Gladstone, "Speech at the Eisteddfod," Wrexham, September 4, 1888, in The Times, September 5, p. 6.

[68] Morgan, Rebirth of a Nation, p. 120.

[69] Bogdanor claimed [Devolution, pp. 122 - 123.], "In Wales then, the sentiment of nationality was not powerful enough to sustain a strong Home Rule movement." It is probably more accurate to attribute the decline of Home Rule to a multiplicity of interests rather than to a conspicuous weakness.

victories were significant achievements.

Scotland (1850 - 1914)

> For so long as an hundred remain alive we are minded never a whit to bow beneath the yoke of English dominion. It is not for glory, riches, or honours, that we fight: it is for liberty alone, the liberty which no good man relinquishes but with his life.[70]
> "Declaration of Arbroath," April 6, 1320

Historians and Scottish Nationalists[71] view the Declaration of Arbroath as a critical expression of Scottish nationalism. It is the oldest nationalist document in Europe. Scottish nationalism is striking in its antiquity and persistence, but not in its consistency or continuity. Scottish nationalism was episodic. There are many 'missing links' in a nationalist history of Scotland, but commencing in the 1850s, national expression became more concerted.

Nationalism in Scotland varied geographically. Rosebery's focus and consequently the focus of this thesis was primarily upon lowland Scotland - where the population and his power base were concentrated. In the highlands, the most important issue was the complex land question.[72] Rosebery viewed the Crofter Question as a Highland rather than a Scottish issue and opposed all attempts to apply crofter legislation to the whole of Scotland. The disturbances in the western highlands and islands in the early 1880s came on the heels of the Irish Land War. An independent Crofters Party briefly emerged, to work in tandem with the Highland Land Law

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[70] William Croft Dickinson, Gordon Donaldson and Isabel A. Milne, A Source Book of Scottish History (3 vols., London, 1952 - 54), vol. i, p. 133.

[71] Hugh MacDiarmid declared, "the declaration of Arbroath the greatest (and farthest going) document in the history of democracy" in Owen Dudley Edwards, Gwynfor Evans and Hugh MacDiarmid, Celtic Nationalism (London, 1968), p. 357

[72] See James Hunter, "The Politics of Highland Land Reform," Scottish Historical Review, vol. liii (1974), 45 - 68, and his monograph, The Making of the Crofting Community (Edinburgh, 1976).

Reform Association (HLLRA).[73] With regard to the highlands, Gladstone and Rosebery were primarily interested in preserving law and order rather than attempting to solve the complex issues involved.[74] Land reform, Home Rule, and Disestablishment caused fragmentation within Scottish Liberalism. The voice of Scottish nationalism remained cacophonous rather than unanimous.

Though early Scottish national movements are commonly dismissed as unrepresentative and unimportant,[75] they reflected a disillusionment with the *status quo*. From 1746 - when the Marquess of Tweeddale[76] vacated the Secretaryship for Scotland - to 1827, Scotland was intermittently governed by a 'Scottish Manager' - a Scot with influence in the Cabinet and in Scotland. In 1827, this system ended when the 2nd Viscount Melville[77] (the most powerful Scot of his day) refused to take office under Canning. From 1827 to 1885, responsibility for Scottish affairs was divided between the Home Secretary and the Lord Advocate.[78] Under this system, Scottish interests

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[73] The Crofter Party and the HLLRA, like Parnell's Irish National Party and Davitt's Land League, complemented each other. The Crofter Party had a measure of success in 1885 when it won four seats at the General Election. The four MPs were Gavin Clark, Charles Fraser-MacKintosh, Dr Roderick MacDonald, and D. H. MacFarlane. These Crofter MPs originally maintained their independence, but they were eventually absorbed by the Liberal Party, and ceased to be an important political force.

[74] Later in 1882, Rosebery admitted, "I have left the Skye question very much alone, except in a few conversations with the Lord Advocate, because it is a matter entirely in his department, & because I have no information as to the legal questions involved." Harcourt MSS, Deposit 54, f. 45, Rosebery to Harcourt, November 3, 1882.

[75] Tom Nairn noted in The Break-up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-nationalism (2nd ed., London, 1981), p. 105, "Between 1800 - 1870 for example, there simply was no Scottish Nationalist movement of the usual sort."

[76] John Hay (1695 - 1762), 4th Marquess of Tweeddale, became Secretary for Scotland in 1741 after Walpole's resignation. His incompetence was one factor which accounted for the office remaining vacant for 140 years.

[77] Robert Saunders Dundas (1771 - 1851) was the son and political heir of his father Henry Dundas. He was a Tory MP for Hastings (1794 - 96), Rye (1796 - 1801), and Midlothian (1801 - 11). In 1811, he succeeded his father as 2nd Viscount Melville. He served as Keeper of the Signet (1800), President of the Indian Board of Control (1807 - 9, 1809 - 12, and 1828), First Lord of the Admiralty (1812 - 27 and 1828 - 30) and Lord Privy Seal [Scotland] (1841 - 51).

[78] Sir David Milne, The Scottish Office (Oxford, 1957), pp. 11 - 13. From 1746 to 1827, power was shared by the Lord Advocate and the 'Scottish Manager.'

were often neglected engendering irritation and frustration.

In 1828, Sir Walter Scott published letters under the pseudonym, Malachi Malagrowther, opposing the government's proposal to abolish small bank notes in Scotland. His words were pointed, "I see my native country of Scotland, if it is yet to be called by a title so discriminative, falling so far as its national, or rather perhaps I ought to say its provincial, interests are concerned, daily into more absolute contempt."[79] In his second letter, Scott warned of the wide implications of this seemingly innocuous measure, "There are none which the impending misery will not reach - there are no Scotchmen so humble that they have not a share in a national insult, so lowly that they will not suffer from a national wrong."[80]

The Reform Act (Scotland) of 1833 marked the birth of modern Scottish politics by expanding the electorate and increasing representation in Westminster.[81] Yet, Parliament remained uninformed and unconcerned about Scottish political and ecclesiastical affairs, causing calamitous repercussions. The most dramatic demonstration of Scotland's dissatisfaction was the Ten Years' Conflict (1833 - 1843) which culminated in the Disruption of 1843. This was a striking manifestation of Scottish Nationalism. The Church of Scotland battled English ignorance and intransigence over an exclusively Scottish matter which was explicitly safeguarded by the Act of Union. After a protracted political and theological controversy, Thomas Chalmers along with 470 ministers left the Church of Scotland to found the

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[79] Malagrowther, Malachi (i.e. Sir Walter Scott), Thoughts on the Proposed Change of Currency and Other Late Alterations, as They Affect or are Intended to Affect the Kingdom of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1828), 1st letter, p. 4.

[80] Scott, Thoughts on the Proposed Change of Currency, 2nd letter, p. 5.

[81] The Union of 1707 granted Scotland 45 MPs (one more than the Duchy of Cornwall!). This number rose to 53 in 1832, 60 in 1863, and to 72 in 1885, while the number of Scottish representative peers remained constant at 16.

Free Church of Scotland.[82]

National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights

In the 1850s, Scottish discontent found expression in the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights (NAVSR) which was as successful as its name was brief. Founded in 1853 as a non-party organization by the Tory poet, William Edmondstoune Aytoun(**), the members of the NAVSR tended to be Tories and Radicals - which naturally invited attacks from Scottish Whigs. Though described by The Scotsman, as "some two or three people, names unmentioned, having had a meeting, place and date unknown, and constituted themselves an aggrieved and indignant nation,"[83] the NAVSR cannot be dismissed so easily. The Earl of Eglinton(**) was president, James Grant(**) was its prolific pamphleteer and membership included Sir Archibald Alison(**), Sir Thomas Gladstone of Fasque(**), Hugh Miller(**), James Begg(**),[84] Duncan McLaren(**), Patrick Dove(**), Professor Sir James Simpson(**) and Noel Paton(**). The organisation appealed exclusively to the professional and upper classes as its five shilling annual subscription effectively excluded working-class membership.[85]

The defeat of the Scottish Education Bill in 1854 highlighted the

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[82] For a full treatment of the Disruption from a political and theological standpoint see Stewart J. Brown, Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth in Scotland (Oxford, 1982).

[83] The Scotsman, July 6, 1853, p. 3, quoted in H. J. Hanham, "Mid-century Scottish nationalism: Romantic and Radical," in Robert Robson (ed.), Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain Essays in Honour of George Kitson Clark (London, 1967), p. 166.

[84] As early as January 10, 1850, Begg identified Scotland's problems: too few MPs, too little time for Scottish affairs, and too much power in the hands of the Lord Advocate. Begg proposed the restoration of the Scottish Secretary and even the reconstitution of a Scottish Parliament, see Thomas Smith, Memoirs of James Begg DD (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1885 - 88), vol. ii, p. 148.

[85] By contrast, over three decades later, the Scottish Home Rule Association requested only a shilling subscription.

NAVSR's complaint against Westminster's treatment of Scottish legislation. Supported by a Scottish majority of 36 to 14, the bill was defeated by a margin of 193 to 184. A clear Scottish majority could not defeat a "solid phalanx of Conservatives, English dissenters and some Roman Catholics."[86] Hugh Miller, the editor of the influential Free Church newspaper The Witness, described the NAVSR as,

> a most strange specimen of heterogeneous coalition. The Voluntary and the Establishment-man stand side by side, - the Whig and the Conservative, - the Presbyterian and the Episcopalian, - nay, even the Jacobite and the Free Churchman.[87]

Heterogeneity was a potential strength. However, this diversity created complications when other issues became involved. Voluntaries and Establishment-men could unite behind the NAVSR but, once the church question was raised, cooperation was impossible.

Though the NAVSR ceased to exist after the Crimean War, it laid a foundation upon which later movements would build. It advocated:

> 1. The return to the true spirit of the Act of Union, namely the preservation of Scottish institutions and laws.
> 2. The better administration of Scottish public affairs with the restoration of the Secretary of State.
> 3. Increased Scottish representation in Westminster.[88]

Despite its tame platform, the NAVSR drew sharp and unwarranted attacks.

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[86] G. W. T. Omond, The Lord Advocates of Scotland, 1834 - 1880 (London, 1914), pp. 184, 186.

[87] The Witness, November 5, 1853, quoted in Hanham's, "Mid-century Scottish nationalism," p. 168.

[88] Sir Reginald Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism: A Study (London, 1954), p. 286.

Henry Cockburn (a Whig) quipped, "I have seldom seen greater nonsense."[89] On July 7, 1853, The Times attacked the organization as "a disgraceful imitation of the worst features of the Irish character."[90] Even The Scotsman (a Whig paper) characterised the movement as the "Scotch repealers" and the "Scoto-Irish party."[91] Scottish national movements, however innocuous, were stigmatized by their real or supposed similarities to Irish national movements.

These fears were shared too by the leadership of the NAVSR. Sir Archibald Alison remarked that shortly after the formation of the NAVSR,

> I soon perceived elements of a dangerous character beginning to work in it. Lord Eglinton and I were perfectly united in our views, which were to abide firmly by the Union, and utter nothing which could shake the general attachment to it; but resting on that basis, to demand for Scotland her full share in the benefits which the neighbouring countries, and Ireland in particular had long derived from it ... But we soon found out that other more ardent and hot-headed patriots were not content with this object, but not obscurely aimed at a dissolution of the Union as the only remedy likely to be at all effectual to obviate the admitted evils of the present state of things. Already the Irish repealers were stretching out the hand of amity to this new and unexpected ally. The movement, therefore, was obviously becoming dangerous, not from the strength of its opponents, but the imprudence of some of its supporters; and accordingly Lord Eglinton and I agreed that it should be allowed to drop.[92]

This passage highlights the recurring clash between moderates and extremists in Scottish nationalism. As Hanham noted, "Scottish nationalism has ...

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[89] Henry Cockburn, The Journal of Henry Cockburn, 1831 - 1854 (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1874), vol. ii, p. 295. Cockburn continued, "I wish them all success in their attempts to loose the public pursestrings, but I fear that their folly will rather throw discredit on the reasonable portion of our demands."

[90] The Times, July 7, 1853, p. 4.

[91] The Scotsman, July 6, 1853, p. 3, and The Scotsman, November 19, 1853, p. 4.

[92] Sir Archibald Alison, Some Account of My Life and Writings (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1883), vol. ii, p. 30. Alison may also have been alarmed by an article in the Dublin Nation [reprinted in The Scotsman, November 19, 1853, p. 4] in which the Irish Repealers welcomed the NAVSR as a an ally in the struggle against English tyranny.

always tended to speak with different voices."[93] Alison's remarks demonstrated that a shared sense of grievance did not imply a united aim. In one sense the NAVSR was founded because some Scots feared obliteration by England, but it ended because of the even greater fear that Scotland would be engulfed by agitation in Ireland. Scotland lacked a unifying and inspiring goal comparable to Irish Home Rule or Welsh Disestablishment.

Secondly, Alison also betrays a common fear that Irish nationalism threatened to infect Scotland. The Irish desired repeal while the Scots simply wanted the Union to operate as it ought. Throughout the 19th century, Scotland continually faced comparisons with Ireland - which were rarely constructive. Scotland and Ireland were in a 'Catch-22.' Ireland was outspoken and extreme while Scotland was loyal and moderate. Consequently, English MPs opposed Ireland and ignored Scotland.[94]

Scottish Affairs in Westminster

In December 1880, Rosebery wrote the following memorandum to Harcourt, explaining the management of Scottish affairs since the Union,

> Dear Harcourt December 13, 1880
> I venture to address a few lines to you as to the management of public business in Scotland, which, by accident rather than design, has lapsed into the hands of one of the legal officers of the Crown. I do this with the more impartiality as the present holder of that office is a

[93] Hanham, Scottish Nationalism, p. 12.

[94] James Begg later noted, "If the Scotch were only one half as clamorous as the Irish, these matters would soon assume a very different aspect. As it is their quiescence is punished by neglect, by measures and proposals totally insufficient or by the dangling of bills before their eyes which are seldom destined to become law," in James Begg, Scottish Public Affairs Civil and Ecclesiastical, A Letter to the Right Hon. The Earl of Beaconsfield with Special Reference to the coming General Election and the advent of Mr Gladstone to Scotland, (Edinburgh, 1879), p. 20.

man of great ability - as well as a friend of my own;[95] so that the remarks I make are not personal, but supported entirely on public grounds & by a long course of events.

But consider the state of things in Scotland as compared with the other portions of the United Kingdom. A lawyer is chosen from among the Scottish lawyers in Parliament (of whom there are generally, but two or three at most) to fill the post of Lord Advocate or Attorney-General. This is a necessity no doubt & the area of selection seems small enough for a legal office of considerable power. But accidentally there has accrued to this legal office the functions & powers of a Chief Secretary or a Secretary of State for Scotland. You arrive, therefore, at this singular state of things that you tie your hands in the appointment to this important post, the more weighty duties of which are political, to two or three persons who may never have been a session in Parliament before they undertake the representation of Scotland and the management of Scottish matters in the House of Commons.

This state of things was never contemplated. Historically the case stands broadly thus. From the Union to the year 1725 there was a Secretary of State for Scotland, from 1725 to 1737 the then Lord Advocate, Duncan Forbes of Culloden,[96] transacted much of the business of that Secretaryship under the supervision & control of John, Duke of Argyll & Greenwich, who was practically the Scottish Prime Minister till his death in 1743.[97] From 1731 to 1746 there was also in existence the revived Secretaryship of State, but the real power of the

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[95] John McLaren (1831 - 1910), the eldest son of Duncan McLaren, improved Gladstone's prospects in Midlothian in 1880, by overseeing the rapid construction of homes in Tynecastle to swell the number of registered Liberal electors. He was MP for Wigtown (1880), Berwick (1880 - 81), and Edinburgh (1881). As Lord Advocate (1880 - 81), he clashed with Harcourt, the Home Secretary. McLaren felt that he was horribly treated and was greatly relieved when in August 1881 he was appointed Lord of the Session as Lord McLaren. The Scotsman, April 7, 1910, p. 6.

[96] Duncan Forbes of Culloden (1685 - 1747) was named Advocate-Depute in 1716, sat for Inverness Burghs (1722 - 37), and served as Lord Advocate (1725 - 37) and Lord President of the Court (1737 - 46). Forbes was an ardent supporter of the Hanoverian regime and tried to quell both the '15 and '45 risings. He fell out of favour in 1746 because he had urged leniency towards the Jacobites.

[97] John Campbell (1680 - 1743), 2nd Duke of Argyll, succeeded to his father's title in 1703. He was one of the strongest supporters of the 1707 Act of Union. A soldier, he fought under Marlborough during the War of the Spanish Succession, During the 1715 Jacobite Rising, he commanded the Hanoverian Troops in Scotland. He was described by Swift [The Complete Peerage, vol. i, p. 227 n.] as an "ambitious, covetous, cunning Scot [who] has no principle, but his own interest and greatness."

office seems to have been exercised by the two persons I have named.[98]

The management of Scotland from this date for about thirty years seems to have been attached to no particular office. We catch sight of for an instant of 'the transient and embarrassed phantom' of Mr Stuart MacKenzie, brother to Lord Bute, who represented the Government in Scotland in 1763 with the post of Scottish Privy Seal (This is explicitly stated in the manuscript memoirs of the Duke of Grafton).[99] In 1775, we arrive at a very distinct epoch. From 1775 to 1811, in various offices and under various titles, Scotland was ruled by Harry Dundas. From 1811 till 1827, the second Lord Melville who was like Stuart MacKenzie, Privy Seal of Scotland, governed the country. When Mr Canning came to be Prime Minister he only knew the traditions of the previous half century, and, in the political jargon of the day, he consented "to let Lord Binning[100] have Scotland." But Abercromby & other Scottish members besought Canning to put an end to the practice of appointing an irresponsible & unofficial person to this important charge, and Lord Binning was induced to abdicate. This was the end of the old bad system. But from that time to this, there has been no system at all. There have been Lords Advocate, and Scottish Lords of the treasury and confidential friends of the Government in Scotland, all taking their share of the duties of a Scottish Secretary of State. Mr Abercromby,[101] Mr Kennedy,[102] Sir

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[98] Rosebery seems to have forgotten, Archibald Campbell (1682 - 1761), the Earl of Ilay and later 3rd Duke of Argyll, who along with his brother managed Scottish Affairs. A stalwart supporter of the Protestant succession, he was a Commissioner of the 1707 Treaty of Union and a Representative Scottish Peer (1707 - 13, 1715 - 61). He held the following offices, Extraordinary Lord of Session (1708 - 61), Lord Justice General [Scotland] (1710 - 61), Lord Privy Seal [Scotland] (1721 - 33), Keeper of the Great Seal [Scotland] (1733 - 61). He was Lord Lieutenant of Midlothian (1715 - 61) and Haddington (1737 - 61). This seems to be just a slip on Rosebery's part because in 1883 he publicly remarked, "For thirty years in the last century Scotland was ruled by two Dukes of Argyll." Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," July 21, 1883, in The Scotsman, July 23, p. 3.

[99] James Stuart Mackenzie (1719? - 1800) was MP for Argyllshire (1742 - 47), Buteshire (1742 - 47), Ayr Burghs (1754 - 61) and Ross-shire (1761 - 80). He was appointed by his brother (the Prime Minister), the 3rd Earl of Bute, to be the Keeper of the Privy Seal, Scotland (1763 - 65).

[100] The courtesy title of Thomas Hamilton (1780 - 1858), after 1828 the 9th Earl of Haddington.

[101] James Abercromby (1776 - 1858) was a Whig MP for Midhurst (1807 - 12), Calne (1812 - 30) and Edinburgh (1832 - 39). He served as Lord Chief of the Court of Exchequer [Scotland] before its suppression and he sat briefly in Melbourne's Cabinet as Master of the Mint (1834). He was Speaker of the House of Commons (1835 - 39) and in 1839, he was created Baron Dunfermline.

[102] Thomas Francis Kennedy (1788 - 1879) was a Liberal MP for Ayr Burghs (1818 - 34). He served as a Lord of the Treasury (1833 - 34) and was created a Privy Councillor in 1837.

James Gibson-Craig,[103] and Sir William Gibson-Craig may be named as Whigs who acted as advisers of the Government at various times in Scotland. Mr Adam, had he remained in this country, would probably have assisted the present Government in the same unavowed capacity. But from there being no office to which the functions of a Scottish Secretary of State, which were so to speak, going a begging, could be attached except the Lord Advocateship. They have gradually & so to speak unintentionally become united to that post.

Now my object in writing is to point out that this is both bad and absurd. You choose your Scottish Minister, who should be as much versed in men & in politics as the Chief Secretary for Ireland, from among one or two Scottish lawyers who may never have been in the House of Commons at all and have had little experience of the world outside the law courts of Edinburgh. It is true that we have been so fortunate as to secure men of exceptional ability such as Lords Young & Moncrieff & the present Lord Advocate, but these are only happy accidents. At present you have no Scottish lawyer in the house, for though one has been elected he has not taken his seat, while you have a dozen tried and experienced Scottish members who could represent Scotland admirably in the House but who are debarred from doing so by the fact that they are not lawyers.

As to making a suggestion, I am embarrassed by ignorance as to the exact relations between the Home Office & the Lord Advocate. It has often been proposed that there should be renewed the Secretaryship of State for Scotland. I think this is more than required. The late Government on the other hand wished to establish an under-secretaryship for Scotland, which appears open to the opposite objection that it would not be enough. There would be a feeling of soreness in Scotland at being handed over to an under-secretary, for the Scots as you know are touchy and sensitive in these matters. But that is a difficulty that would be easily got over. Take one of the old Scottish offices and attach it to the Home Office. There is for instance, the post of President of the Privy Council of Scotland which was suppressed at the time of the Union. Such an office implies a vice-presidency. Why should there not be a Vice-President of the Council for Scotland? There is again the ancient office of Comptroller. Again when the Privy Seal on the Clerk Registership became vacant one of them might be utilised for this purpose.

As regards the expense again there is always the impending

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[103] Sir James Gibson-Craig (1765 - 1850) was a prominent Scottish Whig active in the reform agitation (1830 - 32). Hutchison describes him [A Political History of Scotland, 1832 - 1924, p. 41] as "the moving spirit behind Edinburgh Whiggery." In his obituary [The Scotsman, March 9, 1850, p. 3], he was eulogised as "the guiding spirit and chief instrument - at once the head and the hands - in the half century's struggle for the political regeneration of Scotland."

> suppression of a judgeship in Scotland which would save £3,000 a year. But in any case Scotland is entitled to make demands of a peremptory kind that money should be freely given her for the purposes of real official utility. The offices which were revived at the time of Union have been cut down with an unsparing hand in a manner which would not have been meekly borne in any other country. In 1830 for instance a saving of £23,000 a year was effected by the suppression of nineteen great dignities in Scotland. When therefore Scotland asks for a salaried official of real utility it does not become the treasury to be niggardly.
>
> Forgive this crude and imperfect sketch and believe me,
> Yrs very truly, Rosebery[104]

This memorandum is reproduced in full because it is an excellent encapsulation of the Government of Scotland from the Union to 1880, written by Rosebery, a "confidential friend of the Government in Scotland." This document shows that Rosebery used his detailed knowledge of Scottish history to build a compelling case for redressing imbalances and inequities.

During the 1860s and 1870s, Scottish affairs were rarely discussed in Parliament. The few debates occurred in the early morning hours often before an empty House. However, the Scots did not remain silent. In 1869, a majority of Scots MPs addressed a letter to Gladstone protesting the current management of Scottish affairs. Gladstone appointed a commission under the leadership of Lord Camperdown.[105] The Camperdown report - which was soon forgotten - recommended the appointment of an under-secretary at the Home Office rather than a Secretary for Scotland.[106] This new office would

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[104] Harcourt MSS, Dep. 54, f. 4, Rosebery to Harcourt dated December 13, 1880. A transcription of this letter also survives [RP, MS 10034, f. 44].

[105] Robert Adam Philips Haldane Haldane-Duncan, 3rd Earl of Camperdown (1841 - 1918) was a Whig Lord in waiting (1868 - 70). He broke with Gladstone in 1886 over Irish Home Rule.

[106] "The Camperdown Commission Report" summarised the current system, "The Lord Advocate is strictly speaking subordinate to the Home Office, but he is consulted with reference to Scotch questions and Scotch patronage, and it is admitted that his advice is generally followed. Practically therefore, he is [the] Scotch Minister." Reports from Commissioners, Civil Departments (Scotland), 1870, vol. xviii, p. 7.

have symbolic as well as practical value, for even if the new minister relieved, "the Lord Advocate from none of his duties, [the appointment] would at all events silence the complaint that the business of Scotland is conducted too much in reference to legal ideas."[107] Rosebery understood these challenges and sought throughout the early 1880s to restructure Scottish government to satisfy Scotland's desires and address her complaints.

Nationalism does not express itself exclusively in politics. Lynch noted that Patrick Geddes first used the phrase "The Scots Renascence" in his journal Evergreen in 1895,[108] decades before it was appropriated by the literary and cultural movement of the 1920s and 1930s. Citing the restoration of the Scottish Office (1885), the establishment of the Scottish History Society (1886), and the opening of the National Portrait Gallery (1889), Lynch contends, there was "a real sense in the 1880s and 1890s of a renewed national consciousness."[109] These gains were tangible whereas Scottish political agendas often proved ineffectual and ephemeral. Often overlooked, however, is Rosebery who restored the Scottish Office and established the Scottish History Society and indirectly promoted the National Portrait Gallery.[110]

Conclusion

In the closing decades of Victoria's reign, nationalism was evident in Ireland, Wales and Scotland. The national aspirations of the three 'Celtic'

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[107] "The Camperdown Commission Report," p. 8.

[108] Eulogising John Stuart Blackie and Robert Louis Stevenson, Patrick Geddes remarked, "the leader of nationality in ripest age, the leader of literature in fullest form have alike left us. Each was in his own way 'Ultimus Scotorum,' each in his own way the link with our best days of nationality and genius." in "The Scots Renascence," Evergreen: A Northern Seasonal, vol. i, 1895, p. 132 - 3.

[109] Michael Lynch (ed.), Scotland, 1850 - 1979: Society, Politics, and the Union (London, 1993), p. 6.

[110] As detailed in Chapter 5, Rosebery secured the appointment of J. R. Findlay - the great benefactor of the National Portrait Gallery - to the Board of Manufactures in 1882.

nations, for weal or woe, were intertwined. In the fickle theatre of Westminster, the Irish remained on centre stage for over forty years, keeping the Home Rule debate current and vital. Irish nationalists, however, jealously guarded this spotlight. The Scots and Welsh were warmed from the reflected glow of the footlights, but they had to be content waiting backstage for their cue to enter. The cue was never given.

Nationalism in the United Kingdom during the 19th century may be likened to the parable of the sower.[111] In England, the seed of nationalism fell on the path and was quickly eaten; in Scotland the seed was cast in rocky soil, it sprouted but was soon withered away, because the soil was shallow; in Wales the seed fell among thorns and when it grew up it was choked by other issues; but in Ireland the seed fell on good - if not too fertile - soil and produced an abundant - and possibly too abundant crop.

[111] Mark, chapter 4, verses 1 - 20. This parable is different from the one quoted earlier.

5. Rosebery and Scottish Nationalism

> They must be blind indeed who can suppose that my power in Scotland arose from my being King's advocate; in my hands it was a very good concomitant, but in itself independent of talent and consequence in the House of Commons, I hold it as nothing. What consequence in Scotland, altho most respectable as Crown lawyers, did either Miller or Montgomery derive from being in that situation. I doubt much if any of them ever named a tidemaster.[1]

Henry Dundas, like Lord Rosebery a century later, achieved a position of prominence in both Scottish and British politics.[2] Though he was never fully responsible for Scotland's affairs, Rosebery was recognised as Scotland's spokesman, adept at management and manipulation. As Dundas correctly asserted, the possession of office did not translate into power or prestige. The office gained its lustre from its occupant and not vice-versa. From the 1870s, Rosebery constructed a position for himself by securing and solidifying a power base in Scotland. In this chapter, I will present Rosebery's Scottish career chronologically, giving a separate discussion about his views on Scottish Disestablishment and Scottish Home Rule.

The Voice of Scotland

> And here the singer for his art
> Not all in vain may plead
> "The Song that nerves a nation's heart
> Is in itself a deed."[3]

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[1] RP, MS 10225, pp. 20 - 21, Henry Dundas to his brother Robert [copy] dated November 23, 1782. Sir Thomas Miller (1717 - 1789) was Lord Advocate (1760 - 66) and Sir James Montgomery (1721 -1803) was Lord Advocate (1766 - 75). They were the two predecessors of Dundas as Lord Advocate.

[2] With regard to Dundas, Rosebery noted, "I believe that [Dundas] did a great deal of good for Scotland, but I believe that the principles of his government were wholly bad." Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," July 21, 1883, in The Scotsman, July 23, p. 3.

[3] Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "Epilogue" to the "Charge of the Heavy Brigade," in C. Ricks (ed.), Poems of Tennyson (London, 1969), p. 1310.

Even if Rosebery had achieved nothing, he deserves our attention for being a Scottish spokesman without parallel.[4] As Stanley Baldwin noted after Rosebery's death, "he has no successor in Scotland. He will be mourned in the United Kingdom and his name as a great Scotsman will live."[5] Baldwin's observation is only half true; Rosebery has been forgotten. Gifted with the indefinable qualities of leadership and charisma, Rosebery placed Scottish affairs on the political agenda. As he noted, with regard to Burns, one individual can uphold a nation's cause,

> Burns exalted our race; he hallowed Scotland and the Scottish tongue. Before his time we had for a long period been scarcely recognised, we had been falling out of the recollection of the world. From the time of the union of the Crowns, and still more from the time of the legislative union, Scotland had lapsed into obscurity. Except for an occasional riot or a Jacobite rising her existence was almost forgotten. She had indeed her Robertsons and her Humes writing History to general admiration, but no trace of Scottish authorship was discoverable in their works; indeed every flavour of national idiom was carefully excluded. The Scottish dialect, as Burns called it, was in danger of perishing. Burns seemed at this juncture to start to his feet and reassert Scotland's claim to national existence; his Scottish notes rang through the world, and he preserved the Scottish language for ever.[6]

In the late 19th century, Rosebery served a similar purpose. Rosebery was not ashamed of this Scottishness; in fact he portrayed himself as more Scottish than he actually was (he was half-English!). Yet, many commentators have

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[4] Sir Reginald Coupland's assertion [Welsh and Scottish Nationalism, p. 293] that Rosebery's "appeal to his fellow countrymen was rational, practical, historical, and only rarely emotional," cannot be accepted. Rosebery's speeches had an emotional and sentimental quality which inspired Scots at home and throughout the Empire.

[5] Speaking to his son in 1923 (when Baldwin became Prime Minister), Rosebery was not nearly as generous, "it is a strange experience to realise that the Prime Minister of Great Britain is a man of whom one has never heard." Rhodes James, p. 484. Rosebery's objection to Baldwin, like Gladstone's intransigence to Chamberlain, was probably based on class rather than politics.

[6] Rosebery, "Burns," Dumfries, July 21, 1896, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, p. 4.

ignored his Scottish identity which is crucial to understanding his complex and seemingly capricious career.

Rosebery balanced many active patriotisms: he was a Scot, a Briton, a Londoner and an Imperialist. As The Scotsman noted in 1885, Rosebery

> has never been the advocate of narrow national prejudices; he has seen the whole is made stronger by the strengthening of its parts. Thus when pleading for Scotland, he was always working for the United Kingdom and for the Empire.[7]

Yet it was also true that,

> As a Scotsman, he never allows his international patriotism to dwarf the importance of maintaining our Scottish national life distinct from the larger and fuller life of the Empire. He is splendidly parochial in his cosmopolitanism.[8]

This balance has been achieved by only a few. Rosebery was both a Scottish patriot and a nationalist. He loved his country and recognised its distinct heritage. Scotland, at least in part because of its long history, remained a definable entity even after a century and a half of Union with England. Rosebery's patriotism was neither shallow or affected. His nationalism had an ancient pedigree. His study of Scottish history was rigorous and detailed. In marking the 600th anniversary of the battle of Stirling Bridge in 1897, Rosebery assessed modern Scotland's debt to Wallace. For without him,

> The Scots might never have rallied for defence at all. Bruce might never have stood forth, and Bannockburn might not have been fought. Scotland might have become a remote and oppressed or neglected district, without a name or a history or a friend; and the centuries of

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[7] The Scotsman, November 14, 1885, p. 8.

[8] The Student [University of Edinburgh], November 3, 1898, p. 46.

> which we are so proud, centuries so full of energy and passion and dramatic history, might have passed silently and heedlessly over a dark and unknown province. Wallace was in truth the champion who stood forth and prevented this, who asserted Scotland as an independent country, who made, or remade, the Scots as a nation. It is for this that we Scotsmen must put him in the highest place. It is for this that we venerate his name, now that the dark and bloody memories of his time are memories, and nothing more. It is for this that we honour him when his foes are our nearest and dearest friends.[9]

Rosebery extols Wallace - the great Scottish patriot - in a British context. Thus, Rosebery's Imperialism and Scottish patriotism remain uncompromised. After the passage of nearly a century, these words give a faint glimpse of Rosebery's ability to move and stir his fellow Scots. His patriotism as that of Wallace moved him to act.

Early Stirrings

> Ld Melville and Scotsmen:
> "When I came up to London as Lord Advocate" said he "I came determined to fight the battle for Scotsmen & to win for them their proper place in public estimation, & their proper share of power & influence. Before that time Scotsmen had been looked down upon in England."[10]

Rosebery re-positioned Scotland on the political map. Despite the gains of the Great Reform Act, Scotland remained politically weak and under-represented in Westminster.[11] The most famous Scots - Sir Walter Scott,

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[9] Rosebery, "Sir William Wallace," Stirling, September 13, 1897, in Wallace, Burns, Stevenson: Appreciations by Lord Rosebery (Stirling, 1905), pp. 20 - 21.

[10] Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 2, f. 804, n.d. An extract from Memoir of Sir Henry Bunbury (Privately printed, 1868), p. 24.

[11] His informants continually impressed upon Rosebery the urgency of Scotland's case, "There does not seem to be an approach to any comprehensive treatment of Scottish matters; and I am quite convinced there will never be until Scotland has a political representative in the government capable of making his voice heard. Little stop-gap bills, like patches of

Thomas Chalmers, David Livingstone and Thomas Carlyle - all achieved their fame outside the confines of party politics and in the case of Livingstone and Carlyle outside of Scotland itself. Scottish politics were at a low ebb. After 1832, with the exception of Macaulay and McLaren, Scotland's political representatives were neither memorable nor significant. Several Scottish noblemen like Aberdeen,[12] Buccleuch[13] and Argyll held positions of national authority, but apart from their estates, they had little connection to Scotland and Scottish affairs. Though he was known as the 'Member for Scotland,' Duncan McLaren did not make a great impression on British politics.[14] His extreme voluntarism and his confrontational character made his leadership problematic. In an overwhelmingly English assembly Scottish and Irish members who persisted in pressing their local concerns were seen as either nuisances or obstacles. However, unlike in Ireland and Wales, Scotland's standard was raised by a peer rather than a commoner.

Rosebery's public career in Scotland commenced in 1871 with his address to the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution on the Union of 1707.

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sticking plaster, only make the case of Scotland look worse." RP, MS 10010, f. 19, Cooper to Rosebery dated March 11, 1881.

[12] George Hamilton-Gordon (1784 - 1860), the 4th Earl of Aberdeen, a Tory, was the Ambassador Extraordinary at Vienna (1813), Foreign Secretary (1828 - 30 and 1841 - 46), Secretary for War and Colonies (1834 - 35) and Prime Minister (1852 - 55).

[13] Walter Francis Montagu-Douglas-Scott (1806 - 1884), the 5th Duke of Buccleuch was one of the wealthiest nobles in lowland Scotland. He was Lord Lieutenant of Midlothian (1824 - 84) and Roxburgh (1841 - 84). He sat in Peel's Cabinet (with Gladstone) as Lord Privy Seal (1842 - 46) and Lord President of the Council (1846).

[14] After a Scottish debate in 1878, Lucy observed, "It is difficult to say which has proved the more depressing topic, the Scotch Church question or the mystery of Scotch roads and bridges. The only intelligent notion an outsider could be expected to bear away with him would be that there are as many sects in Scotland as there are roads and bridges. Another idea he would gather is one of marvel at Duncan McLaren's intimate acquaintance alike with churches, roads and bridges. The senior member for Edinburgh has an insatiable appetite for details and figures, and the only mistake he makes is his belief that other men are equally avid. ... There are times when McLaren's voice sinks below the key at which it is audible throughout the House. The inconvenience is increased by a habit he has contracted of confidentially addressing the blue book or report he holds in his hand." Henry W. Lucy, A Diary of Two Parliaments: The Disraeli Parliament, 1874 -1880 (London, 1885), p. 430.

Rosebery insisted that the Union was beneficial to Scotland, though it was not perfect.[15] Rosebery first participated in Scottish politics when efforts were made to abolish Patronage. He accepted the right of the state to control the affairs of the church, but he protested against the arbitrary exercise of this prerogative. A manuscript gives a valuable insight into his early thoughts,

> I have always supposed that the question of patronage in Scotland is not so much one of right, for of that there is no doubt,[16] not so much one of expediency which would give rise I fancy to but little difficulty but the practical obstacles presented by redistributing the patronage. The Act of 1690 may not indeed have been entirely satisfactory but it would at any rate be better than the present state of things. But I do not believe that government will seriously declare that the difficulties of this question are so great that they cannot deal with it. They may have scruples they can hardly have misgivings. But at any rate let them tell us plainly in what light they view the question.
>
> Lord Macaulay ends his graphic account of the passing of the Act of 1712 by saying "This Sir is the true history of dissent in Scotland."[17] The true history of dissent! What an awful accusation if true. That an act of political jobbery at best, of political malice we suspect, should have divided a church whose history is the glory of its country. But the worst is that it cannot be deemed that it is so, that

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[15] Rosebery later qualified his views on the Union. On November 5, 1880, he noted, "A great page records the bloodless and prosperous history of the Scottish Union; a greater page lies vacant before us on which to inscribe a fairer union still." Rosebery, "Aberdeen Rectorial Address," in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 105. At first, Rosebery was reluctant to accept the charges that the Union was brought about by disreputable means but by 1887 he conceded, "It was not very popular. The means that were employed to carry it were not, perhaps, very creditable; but at the same time it has worked, on the whole pretty well." Rosebery, "Address at Glasgow," April 27, 1887, in The Times, April 28, p. 10. However, in 1889, he firmly maintained, "I cannot assent to the allegation that there was bribery in the Treaty of Union, and all modern historians bear me out in saying so." Rosebery, "Speech at the Glasgow University Liberal Club," November 22, 1889, in The Times, November 23, p. 10. Historical consensus may have supported Rosebery's assertion in 1889: it certainly would not do so in 1996. [See Michael Lynch, Scotland: A New History (Paperback rev. ed., London, 1992), pp. 312 - 13.]

[16] This statement indicates a serious misunderstanding of the Disruption which arose over this very question as to whether a patron (such as a local laird or the Crown) has a "right" to appoint (and effectively exclude) a minister for a particular congregation.

[17] Macaulay, "Speech on Scottish University Tests," in Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 82, cols. 227 - 242, July 9, 1845, and recorded in Thomas Babington Macaulay, Miscellaneous Writings and Speeches of Lord Macaulay (London, 1873), pp. 701 - 11.

> the Act of 1712 is the direct root humanly speaking of all the evils that have since befallen the Scottish church. The tree indeed survived the shock but gradually branch after branch withered or fell off, some indeed comparatively insignificant, but many of great importance until there came the stupendous spectacle of the disruption of 1843. Then we saw the parent trunk split, and a convulsion which rent the church in twain. Moreover we must remember that however trifling some of the former individual secessions had been that at last they united and became a body of great importance. So then in Scotland we have not one church but three churches, three not by division of doctrine so much as by the polity introduced by the Act of 1712. And yet this is the year 1873.[18]

Rosebery bases the thrust of his views on Macaulay's assertion, "to that breech of the treaty of Union are to be directly ascribed all the schisms that have since rent the Church of Scotland,"[19] but he diverges from Macaulay as to whether Patronage was a question of right or expediency.[20] Macaulay insisted,

> I beg Gentlemen, English Gentlemen, to observe that in Scotland this is not regarded as a matter of mere expediency. All staunch Presbyterians think that the flock is entitled, *jure divino* [by divine right], to a voice in the appointment of the pastor.[21]

Rosebery did not concur. He had an academic understanding of the church question, but he failed to grasp its spiritual and emotional dimensions. The Scottish church question was definitely a weakness for Rosebery, who seemed more like a well-meaning Englishman trying to understand a complex Scottish problem, than a Scot for whom the Church question was one of almost

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[18] MSS note from Rosebery dated 1873 tipped into his copy of James Begg's, A Violation of the Treaty of Union (Edinburgh, 1871), NLS pressmark, Ry.1.3.160.

[19] "Speech on Scottish University Tests," in Writings and Speeches of Macaulay, p. 707.

[20] To be fair, Macaulay's connection to the Scottish Church was far closer. His paternal grandfather and great-grandfather were both ministers of the Church of Scotland.

[21] "Speech on Scottish University Tests," in Writings and Speeches of Macaulay, pp. 705 - 6.

hereditary primacy.

In public, he weighed his words closely. In June 1873, responding to a resolution to abolish patronage, he acknowledged the Scots' resolve, but he stopped short of approving this zeal.

> It might seem a trivial and uninteresting [question] to Englishmen, but in Scotland the temper and the disposition of the people prevented any ecclesiastical matter from being trivial ... There was no compromise in religious matters, a thing being either true and right or false and wrong.[22]

He continued, "The Act of 1712 ... was moreover in its language offensive to the church, being eminently dictatorial, and in its spirit abhorrent to the Scottish nation."[23] Interestingly, Rosebery viewed the 1712 Act as an affront against the Scottish nation (which it undoubtedly was) rather than an intrusion by the secular government into spiritual affairs. In 1712, the Church of Scotland was essentially Scotland's only national church and an attack on the church could be equated to an attack on the nation. Despite Rosebery's strong words, he remained almost silent the following year when the Abolition of Patronage Bill was introduced. Lord Young,[24] the previous Lord Advocate, commended him, "I want chiefly to say that I think you acted wisely in abstaining from taking part in the patronage debate - indeed most wisely ... [The bill] will alienate friends and not conciliate enemies."[25] This observation could be applied to almost every Scottish Church bill.

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[22] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 216, col. 1042, June 17, 1873.

[23] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 216, col. 1043, June 17, 1873.

[24] George, Lord Young (1819 - 1907) was made Q.C. in 1868. He was Solicitor General for Scotland (1862 - 66 and 1868 - 69) and Lord Advocate (1869 - 74). He was a Liberal MP for Wigtown (1865 - 74) and was appointed Judge of the Court of Session in 1874.

[25] RP, MS 10074, f. 90, Young to Rosebery dated June 5, 1874.

The Party Man

> To be a Whig grandee and a radical who expressed an interest in social problems and who poked fun at their Lordships' house put Rosebery into a uniquely popular position in Scotland.[26]

The devastating defeat in the 1874 General Election exposed many glaring weaknesses of the Liberal Party. Organisation was primitive, nomination of candidates was haphazard and communication was poor. In this political vacuum, Rosebery soon attracted attention. As Naylor noted above, Rosebery - an aristocratic populist - captured the heart and imagination of the Scottish people. J. M. Barrie, the author of Peter Pan and an early admirer of Rosebery, noted "the uncrowned King of Scotland is a title that has been made for Lord Rosebery whose country has had faith in him from the beginning."[27]

As seen in Chamberlain's National Liberal Federation and Parnell's Irish Nationalist Party, this was an age in which individuals could exert tremendous influence both locally and nationally. In the late 1870s, Rosebery embraced the hands-on work of organising, rallying and speaking. When the East and North of Scotland Liberal Association (ENSLA) first met on February 3, 1877, Rosebery was made President by popular acclamation. As further evidence of his influence, Rosebery convinced Lord Hartington, his friend and the Liberal leader, to preside over the association's first general meeting on November 6, 1877. The contrast between these two noblemen is striking. Rosebery was radical, bold and charismatic, while Hartington was conservative, cautious and lethargic. Hartington, a sage, soporific pillar of conventional English wisdom, quickly sought Rosebery's advice, "I shall

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[26] Adam C. I. Naylor, Scottish Attitudes to Ireland, 1880 - 1914 (University of Edinburgh, Ph.D, 1985), p. 150.

[27] Barrie, An Edinburgh 11 [Originally published, 1889], p. 5.

expect you to give me a safe sentence or two on Scotch church matters."[28] Hartington wished to placate rather than address Scottish concerns.

The ENSLA and later the Scottish Liberal Association gave Rosebery valuable exposure to the concerns of Scotland. After Hartington addressed the ENSLA, Rosebery heard the Perth delegation express the following concern, "As Scotchmen we cannot but feel that the representation of Scotland in Parliament is very inadequate, and that the legislative business of our country, when not pushed aside and wholly neglected, receives but scant attention." They suggested, "the appointment of a separate Minister charged with Scotch affairs."[29] These ideas gave Rosebery a blueprint for reforming the management of Scottish affairs. He was well placed to know the mood of the people, to inform public opinion and direct the course of the party. Rosebery did not simply jump on a Scottish bandwagon. He voraciously studied all aspects of Scottish life. The large pamphlet collection which Rosebery gave to the National Library demonstrates an extensive interest in all areas of Scottish history. He also remained abreast of current developments. In November, 1880, he wrote to Donaldson requesting a copy of "all the new books that are published on Scottish subjects."[30]

After Gladstone's Midlothian victory in 1880, the Scots - particularly Rosebery - hoped that a change in the management of Scottish affairs would be forthcoming. In December, 1880, Rosebery - an independent supporter of the Government - had a long discussion with Harcourt (the Home Secretary) and drafted a detailed memorandum.[31] In reply, Harcourt wrote on

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[28] RP, MS 10074, f. 230, Hartington to Rosebery dated November 2, 1877.

[29] SLA MSS, vol. 1, p. 88, meeting in Edinburgh on November 6, 1877.

[30] RP, MS 10013, f. 41, Donaldson to Rosebery dated November 15, 1880 confirming a request made previously by Rosebery. I have made several inquiries at the University of St Andrews. It appears that Rosebery's correspondence to Donaldson has not survived.

[31] Harcourt MSS, Dep. 54, f. 4, Rosebery to Harcourt dated December 13, 1880. This was reproduced in full in chapter 4.

December 23, 1880, "You may rely on my not letting the thing drop as your letter has convinced me more than ever of its expediency."[32] However, Harcourt did not forward Rosebery's memorandum to Gladstone as Rosebery assumed he would. This omission contributed to Rosebery's row with Gladstone in December 1882. History is often a case of oversight and miscalculation rather than machination and intrigue.

In June 1881, a timely opportunity to discuss Scottish Affairs occurred in the Lords, when the Earl of Fife(**) asked the Government, whether "they are willing to consider the desirability of appointing a Minister for Scotland other than a law officer."[33] Rosebery supported Fife and urged, "The Government of a country by the legal profession is almost unexampled in the history of the world."[34] Demonstrating his detailed knowledge of Scottish public opinion, Rosebery warned their Lordships,

> There is another side which I think still more serious and important. It is this - the words 'Home Rule' have begun to be distinctly and loudly mentioned in Scotland ... At the convention of Royal Burghs this year[35] there was a motion brought forward urging that a separate and subordinate legislature should be set on foot to consider Scotch questions. That motion was not largely entertained; but it is a significant sign of the times that in Scotland, where no mention of Home Rule has been made up to this time, under the present circumstances it should be heard. My Lords I remember that the late Lord Beaconsfield, on one occasion in Scotland, implored the people in Scotland to give up 'mumbling the dry bones of political economy, and munching the remainder biscuit of effete Liberalism.' I believe the people of Scotland at the present moment, are mumbling the dry bones of political neglect, and munching the remainder biscuit of Irish

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[32] RP, MS 10034, f. 17, Harcourt to Rosebery dated December 23, 1880.

[33] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 262, col. 312, June 3, 1881.

[34] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 262, cols. 316, 318, June 3, 1881.

[35] Rosebery did not attend this meeting and The Scotsman's account [February 24, 1881, p. 4] omitted any reference to Scottish Home Rule. This suggests that Rosebery's source of information was from one of the delegates to the convention.

legislation.[36]

These words are especially strong coming from Gladstone's host at Midlothian. The message was clear: neither Rosebery nor Scotland were content at the Government's inattention. Speaking for the Government, Lord Granville was generally sympathetic, but non-committal. Yet, the wheels of change were now set in motion.

Under-Secretary for Scottish Affairs

Rosebery's absence from Gladstone's second Government was anomalous. In response at least partially to Rosebery's speech, Gladstone again invited Rosebery to join the government. In August 1881, Rosebery became Under-Secretary at the Home Office for Scottish affairs: Scotland and Rosebery were temporarily placated.[37] Gladstone's letter offering the post was so frequently referred to that it merits full reproduction,

> 10 D St Jul 30.81. Private
> My dear Rosebery
> It has been reported to me that you would be disposed to take the U. Secretaryship of the Home Department, with the Scotch business in particular, & to represent the Department in the H. of Lords.
> If so, the office is entirely at your disposal: and such a disposal I need hardly say would give me great pleasure. For my hour-glass is running out, and I should be grieved not to see you brought into closer relation with the Government of your country, & with your natural & destined career.
> I have three things to say:
> 1. I do not write on the ground of a mere rumour on the one hand nor of a breach of faith on the other. It is something between knowledge and report, and the way to verify it is I think by the question direct.
> 2. I do not think the arrangement would last very long in the present form. There must be within the next six months further manipulation

[36] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 262, cols. 320 - 1, June 3, 1881.

[37] Shortly thereafter, Rosebery resigned the presidency of the Scottish Liberal Association.

> of political offices: and with this there is the likelihood of development, uncertain as to time, but certain, & so more than a likelihood, except as to that element.
> 3. This should be more than unusually private, as your acceptance will entail a new arrangement for Home Office business in the H. of Lords.
> Ever yours WE Gladstone
> [p.s.] With the U.Sec.ship would be naturally combined P.C.ship & the Scotch Commn. of Education.[38]

This extraordinary arrangement again speaks of Rosebery's prestige. The most logical place for the Under-Secretary was in the Commons because the majority of Home Office business was conducted there, but the office was made to accommodate its occupant. Gladstone subtly if not abstrusely makes two assertions. Firstly, Rosebery's desire for office was commonly known and logic dictated that his duties should relate to Scotland. Secondly, Rosebery's talents made Cabinet office a certainty, but his inexperience necessitated an apprenticeship of a limited duration.

On the first rung of power, Rosebery worked well with both J. B. Balfour(**),[39] the Lord Advocate, and Harcourt, the irascible Home Secretary. In public, Rosebery was lionised. On October 25, 1881, at a meeting of the Glasgow Liberal Association in honour of Harcourt, Rosebery was summoned by the crowd to speak. He noted, "I am in some sort what has been termed a back-stairs minister for Scotland."[40] He did not deny this imputation, nor did he remind the crowd that the main speaker, Sir William, was in fact their Minister. Instead, he subtly reinforced the view that he was Scotland's back-stairs minster.

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[38] RP, MS 10022, f. 82, Gladstone to Rosebery dated July 30, 1881.

[39] In 1885, Rosebery reminisced about his association with J. B. Balfour (giving the impression that they were near equals), "We had to work together for some time and in circumstances which might very easily have produced friction ... We always felt that we were both of us working for the public good, and I do not remember any single occasion on which we had the slightest difference of opinion as to promoting that good," Rosebery, "Speech at Grangemouth," October 31, 1885, in The Scotsman, November 2, p. 8.

[40] The Scotsman, October 26, 1881, p. 10.

At the same meeting, he urged the recently formed Glasgow Liberal Association to avoid division,

> As we are agreed upon the principles, that we should be further agreed to maintain those principles with a unanimity of outward form. I suppose gentlemen that when I have said this I shall be told that I speak like a wirepuller. Well, I am not much of a wirepuller, but it seems to me that that is common sense.[41]

Again, Rosebery's words are striking for their frankness. He was indeed pulling wires - trying to influence and restrain an independent Liberal Association. Rosebery, as a good party boss, attempted to paper over the fissures within the party. The next day Rosebery was the principal speaker at a Liberal Demonstration in Dundee. He received an appreciation for his distinguished role, "in promoting that organisation and union of the Liberal Party in Scotland which contributed so powerfully to the successful result of the General Election of 1880."[42] This honour recognised both his presidency of the ENSLA and his efforts to form the Scottish Liberal Association which was achieved in 1881. In reply, Rosebery promised, "I can only do my best, and that I will do to serve the Government we all trust and that country of Scotland that we all love."[43] Rosebery did not reject their fulsome praise, but rather sought to link his actions to his dual commitment to Liberalism and Scotland. It is important to note that Rosebery was making his presence known not simply in Edinburgh where his power base was but also in Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen.

During his short tenure of office, Rosebery established the foundations

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[41] The Scotsman, October 26, 1881, p. 10.

[42] The Scotsman, October 27, 1881, p. 9.

[43] Rosebery, "Speech at Dundee," October 26, 1881, in The Scotsman, October 27, p. 9.

for what would later become the Scottish Office.[44] Harcourt gave Rosebery a good degree of authority and influence, "as Secretary of State I have practically placed all legal patronage at the disposal of the Lord Advocate and all lay patronage in the hands of Lord Rosebery."[45] Consequently, the Rosebery Papers are replete with begging letters and importunate requests. Like Dundas, Rosebery was seen as the fount from which offices and honours flowed. For example in 1882, Cooper informed Rosebery,

> The other day our Mr Findlay[46] told me that he understood there were vacancies on the Board of Manufactures & said outright that he would like to be a member. Of course I knew why he mentioned it to me and for that reason I mention it to you.[47]

Later in 1882, Findlay was appointed to the Board of Manufactures. Findlay saw Rosebery - not Gladstone or Harcourt or the Lord Advocate - as the most logical person to contact. The appointment was reasonable considering the consistent support which The Scotsman gave Gladstone during the Midlothian Campaign and Rosebery during his Rectorial campaigns. Findlay later admitted, "I did what I believe no one connected with The Scotsman ever in the course of its whole existence did before or since. I asked a personal

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[44] The early history of the Scottish Office is admirably presented in H. J. Hanham, "The foundation of the Scottish Office 1881 - 87," The Juridical Review, vol. x (1965), pp. 205 - 44. Alas the primary materials upon which he based this study are not part of the Rosebery Papers in the National Library of Scotland nor are they mentioned in the NRA(S) surveys of the Rosebery papers. An encouraging note appears in John Gibson, The Thistle and the Crown: A History of the Scottish Office (Edinburgh, 1985), p. 188, "Photocopies of this and other Rosebery papers of the 1880s on 'Scotch Business in the Home Office' are held in the Scottish Office Library, New St Andrews House, Edinburgh." Alas, after an extended correspondence with the Scottish Office, these papers cannot be located in the National Library of Scotland, the Scottish Record Office, or the Scottish Office.

[45] GP, Add MS 44629, Harcourt's printed memorandum, ff. 24 - 5, dated March 25, 1883.

[46] John Ritchie Findlay (1824 - 1898) was the owner of The Scotsman. He donated over £70,000 (£3,500,000 today) to endow the Scottish National Portrait Gallery which opened on July 15, 1889. In politics, he was a Liberal but he (and Cooper his editor) broke with Gladstone in 1886 over Home Rule and subsequently The Scotsman was rabidly Unionist.

[47] RP, MS 10010, f. 107, Cooper to Rosebery dated May 30, 1882.

favour of the Government and obtained a seat on the board."[48]

On a practical level, Rosebery had his first opportunity to construct legislation. As Donaldson later noted, following agitation for University reform in 1881 - 2,

> Lord Rosebery happened to have charge of Scottish affairs at the time, and taking a deep interest in this mater, he read everything that was written on the Universities, made full enquiries into the wants of the Scottish people, and drew up the draft of the bill with his own hand. The draft forms the kernel of and essential portion of the act.[49]

When a subject interested Rosebery, his enthusiasm was striking and his intellectual capacity was prodigious. In this case, his rectorial service at Aberdeen and Edinburgh bore fruit by giving him practical knowledge concerning University affairs. Rosebery's rectorships were doubly valuable - they gave him a high profile in Scotland and provided him with important contacts and information.

As Under-Secretary, "Rosebery wanted to disentangle Scottish and English business in the Home office and to establish an Edinburgh office from which he could work."[50] He secured these ends in two ways. Firstly, Rosebery insured that he saw all documents related to Scottish affairs. He arranged, "for all Scottish affairs to pass through the hands of his secretary, W. C. Dunbar(**), who soon established a routine which the office kept up

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[48] Findlay, "Speech at the Opening of the National Portrait Gallery," Edinburgh, July 15, 1889, in The Scotsman, July 16, p. 5. There is no evidence of any communication between Findlay and Gladstone, so the letter from Cooper to Rosebery was the means by which Findlay secured his appointment.

[49] Donaldson, "Address to the University of St Andrews," October 20, 1889, in Sir James Donaldson, Addresses Delivered in the University of St Andrews from 1886 to 1910 (Edinburgh, 1911), pp. 108-9.

[50] Hanham, "The Foundation of the Scottish Office," p. 207.

even after Rosebery had ceased to be under-secretary."[51] Secondly, Rosebery secured rooms in Parliament House, Edinburgh. Scottish grievances were heard in Scotland. Rosebery did have a propensity for self-aggrandizement. When the Duke of Richmond and Gordon became the first Secretary for Scotland in 1885, he noted, "I received two deputations in my rooms over the door of which Roseberry [sic] had painted Secretary of State for Scotland."[52]

As Scotland's 'minister,' Rosebery had to combat English ignorance and indifference. A leader in The Times demonstrates a petty parochialism,

> We may smile at some manifestations of Scottish patriotism, but we should be sorry to see the thing disappear. The flavour is rather rough at first, but when it is toned down ... it is a distinct and valuable addition to national - we mean British character.[53]

The Irish faced entrenched opposition, while the Scots contended with patronising contempt, which in some ways was even harder to overcome.

In his efforts on Scotland's behalf, Rosebery encountered conflict from an unexpected source: Gladstone. Despite encouraging words in the 1882 Queen's Speech,[54] Rosebery soon became dissatisfied. On June 27, 1882, he sounded an alarm over the fate of the Scottish Endowments Bill,

> Three times in three successive sessions has the Government introduced the Bill to Parliament. By a combination of what I fear our

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[51] Hanham, "The Foundation of the Scottish Office," p. 208.

[52] Richmond to Salisbury dated November 19, 1885, in Hanham, "The Foundation of the Scottish Office," p. 238. As First Commissioner of Works, Rosebery was responsible for arranging accommodation for the new office. The Secretary for Scotland only became a Secretaryship of State in 1926.

[53] The Times, November 6, 1882, p. 9.

[54] The 1882 Queen's Address noted, "The interests of some portions of the United Kingdom have suffered peculiarly, of late years, from the extreme pressure of the public business on your time and strength." Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 266, col. 6, February 7, 1882.

> enemies would term indifference on the part of the Government, and very unscrupulous lobbying on the part of a small and corrupt clique which opposes it, it has twice been allowed to lapse. It is now for the third time in danger. ... The Prime Minister was returned by a Scottish constituency, backed by an overwhelming majority of Scottish members. From the day of the first meeting of the new Parliament until the present day of its third session, if I am correctly informed, not one minute of Government time has been allotted to Scotland or Scottish affairs. Can you be surprised that the people of Scotland complain? Of course the first persons to bear the brunt of this are the Lord Advocate and myself. We are not conscious of deserving blame; in and out of the session we have done all we could. But I do not see what more we can do, and our reward, more especially mine, will be to return to Scotland to be taunted with our incapacity to get any attention paid to Scotland. More especially mine, because my appointment was supposed to indicate that greater attention would be paid to Scottish business, whereas it indicates nothing of the sort. ... Unfortunately the view is taken in Scotland that I have a considerable share in the responsibility; and certainly wherever the Scottish halfpence may go, I shall get the Scottish kicks. That is an eventuality which I am not prepared to face, when I am of opinion that the aggressive boot contains a toe of justice.[55]

Rosebery was irritated by the way in which Scottish affairs were being neglected, but even more so he was annoyed at being held responsible for this inaction.[56] Rosebery was extremely sensitive about maintaining his public popularity. As this letter demonstrates, he was not averse to calling in old debts ("The Prime Minister was returned by a Scottish constituency") and making thinly veiled threats ("That is an eventuality which I am not prepared to face"). Only a man confident of his own power would approach the Prime

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[55] GP, Add MS 44288, f. 100, Rosebery to Gladstone dated June 27, 1882. With regard to the Scottish Endowments Bill, Rosebery's intercession may have been useful. After being read the first time on May 1, it was eventually read a second time on July 20 and later secured the Queen's assent on August 18, 1882.

[56] Rosebery raised these same points with Gladstone in person on August 1, 1882, "We then went into a general argument about Scottish legislation in which he said that this session she would have got more than England. 'Yes' I said 'but this is all we have to shew for three sessions and tomorrow we shall have our first minute of government time since this Parliament met in 1880." RP, MS 10176, f. 53, Rosebery's memorandum dated August 2, 1882.

Minister in such a fashion.[57] Of course, this letter also indicates that after almost a year, Rosebery was growing tired of being a junior minister.

Rosebery's public utterances, however, were far different, because he knew he had to maintain his public and particularly his Scottish credibility. In October 1882, he boasted, "we who have charge of Scottish business shall not have cause to be ashamed."[58] Rosebery was not averse to claiming credit for himself,

> I will venture to claim this merit, at least, that if you search through the length and breadth of this country, you will not find one more anxious, to the best of his imperfect lights and to the best of his imperfect abilities to serve the interests of the people of Scotland.[59]

Even if the Government failed to deliver, Rosebery wanted to assure his fellow Scots that the blame did not lie at his door. Of course if advances were made, he stood to receive the lion's share of credit and praise. Rosebery was effectively playing the Government and the Scottish people off against each other - he was not wholly selfish but his motives were certainly not disinterested. With such positive pronouncements, few could imagine the swirling and swift currents which lay beneath a seemingly tranquil surface.

In the closing months of 1882, Gladstone and Rosebery exchanged a voluminous and angry correspondence. Rosebery objected to the mismanagement of Scottish affairs, and he desired his own advancement. After walking with Rosebery, in May 1880, Dilke "came to the conclusion that

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[57] Such a direct approach is risky. As Rosebery noted in his literary journals, when trying to induce the younger Pitt to offer him a peerage, "Sir John Sinclair wrote, 'It was very desirable that the President of the Scotch Agricultural Society' (which office he then held) 'should be a Peer.' Pitt answered that he quite agreed with him, accepted his resignation, and appointed Lord Somerville." Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 2, f. 439.

[58] Rosebery, "Speech at Ayr," October 20, 1882, in The Scotsman, October 21, p. 7.

[59] SLA MSS, vol. 2, p. 26, Annual General Meeting on October 2, 1882.

Rosebery was the most ambitious man I had ever met."[60] Rosebery was ambitious, but he was also concerned about Scotland. Scots rightly expected results, and he was now their 'minister.' Rosebery was not accustomed to failure nor did he relish blame or censure. Accepting the under-secretaryship, Rosebery traded a position in which he received only the kudos of the nation, to one where he received kudos and kicks alike.

The ensuing controversy revolved around the following paragraph in Gladstone's letter of appointment,

> I do not think the arrangement would last very long in the present form. There must be within the next six months further manipulation of political offices: and with this there is the likelihood of development, uncertain as to time, but certain, & so more than a likelihood, except as to that element.[61]

Here, Rosebery saw the promise of increased government attention to Scotland's needs as well as a clear intimation of prompt promotion. Gladstone did not concur. As six months became eighteen, Rosebery doubted both the content of the letter as well as the sincerity of its author.

A partial explanation for this controversy is a simple misunderstanding between the two men. Gladstone lacked time rather than interest for Scotland. Until December 1882, Gladstone was both Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer. His responsibilities were vast and his correspondence was immense. His secretaries wrote a brief docket on the outside of each letter and tied the letters in bundles to facilitate a rapid

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[60] Roy Jenkins, Sir Charles Dilke: A Victorian Tragedy (London, 1958), p. 146, diary entry for May 1880. Many years later, Dilke wrote in the margin, "I have since known Winston Churchill."

[61] RP, MS 10022, f. 82, quoted in full above.

review.[62] With a great number of letters to compose, Gladstone may have been less sensitive to his wording than his recipient. Also, Gladstone's family and secretaries shielded him from unpleasant situations - delaying or withholding information.[63]

While the wording of Gladstone's letter July 30, 1881 seems to substantiate Rosebery's construction, there may have been qualifications, absent on paper but present in Gladstone's mind. His writing style was abstruse.[64] He distinguished between positions which seemed identical, and he harmonised apparent incongruities.[65] Gladstone also expected others to view events in the same light. To be fair, Rosebery should have been aware of this tendency. Rosebery read many volumes of current history which included vignettes from Gladstone's early years. In his literary journals, Rosebery carefully noted all passages related to Gladstone. In 1881, Rosebery read the Life of Bishop Wilberforce. One of Rosebery's notations

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[62] Lord Kilbracken recalled, "Mr Gladstone would go through the bundles thus prepared at top speed, but never omitting to read every individual docket and sometimes (but seldom) taking a letter out of its bundle and examining it," in Reminiscences, 1847 - 1916 (Privately printed, 1916), p. 70.

[63] For example, when Rosebery threatened to resign in January 1883, Hamilton noted, "the two immediate considerations are, first to prevent a catastrophe, namely his resignation, and secondly to keep the matter for the present from Mr Gladstone." Bahlman (ed.), Hamilton's Diary, 1880 - 1885, vol. ii, p. 391, entry dated January 22, 1883.

[64] Rosebery made a notation after reading the Life of Sir James Graham, "Gladstone p. 2 Peel and Graham can not understand him." Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 1, f. 330. The full extract dealt with Gladstone's desire to resign from Peel's government. After receiving an unsealed letter from Gladstone, Peel wrote to Graham on January 3, 1845, "I really have great difficulty sometimes in comprehending what Gladstone means." Graham replied on January 4, "It is always difficult through the haze of words to catch a distant glimpse of Gladstone's meaning ... Gladstone's omission to seal such a letter is most unfortunate; but the enigmatical style has its advantages. I doubt whether there is a post master in England who after reading the letter would understand one word of it," in Charles Stuart Parker, The Life and Letters of Sir James Graham, 1792 - 1861 (2 vols., London, 1907), vol. ii, p. 2.

[65] As Argyll noted, "you are able to draw some distinctions in which I cannot follow you," in the Duchess of Argyll (ed.), George Douglas, Eighth Duke of Argyll (1823 -1900): Autobiography & Memoirs (2 vols., London, 1906), vol. ii, p. 374, Argyll to Gladstone dated April 26, 1881.

foreshadowed the difficulties of the coming months,

> Gladstone intends to be Prime Minister. He has great qualifications, but some serious defects. The chief that when he has convinced himself perhaps by abstract reasoning of some view, he thinks everyone else ought to at once see it as he does, and can make no allowance for difference of opinion.[66]

By December 1882, Gladstone and Rosebery were estranged and Rosebery was prepared to resign. Firstly, Rosebery was afraid of losing Scotland as a power base, and of languishing in a junior ministerial backwater of an under-secretaryship. Secondly, the quarrel had become a matter of honour. Was Gladstone honest in his offer of promotion or had Rosebery placed himself in a false position?

> You are so strong that you can afford to disregard any claim or interest you please. I, on the other hand, am obliged to keep in view the one interest of the nation which I serve and which made me what little I am. I cannot, therefore, honestly remain, if I wished it, a party to an arrangement which I think derogatory to the national position and injurious to the national interests ... I never thought to find myself engaged in an argument with you on what may appear to be a question of my personal advancement. I can only hope that you know me well enough to understand and believe that this is not the case. I serve a country which is the backbone of our party, but which is never recognised.[67]

This was not attempted political blackmail akin to Lord Randolph Churchill's resignation in 1886, but was rather a combination of irritation, impatience and insecurity. If events turned badly, Rosebery stood to lose both his power in Scotland and his close personal friendship with Gladstone. Rosebery had promise and potential, but his political career still lacked the patina which

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[66] Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 2, f. 315, from A. R. Aswell and R. G. Wilberforce, Life of the Right Reverend Samuel Wilberforce D.D. (3 vols., London, 1880 - 2), vol. ii, p. 286, passage dated August 7, 1855.

[67] GP, Add MS 44288, f. 126, Rosebery to Gladstone dated December 16, 1882.

only a Cabinet office could impart. Gladstone held the keys to the Cabinet. Over the next three weeks, through harassing Gladstone, Rosebery secured more attention both for himself and Scottish affairs than he had in eighteen months of patient hard work.

Writing to Rosebery on December 18, Gladstone defended his actions pleading the sheer burden of work,

> I hardly think the time & circs., thus viewed, to be appropriate for a complaint of what you seem to regard & treat as contumacious inattention. If you will lay before me your views of existing wants, & of the proper mode of supplying them, so that they may be considered by me, & by the Cabinet, this shall not be neglected. At present I hardly know that I have any materials before me.[68]

Rosebery must have been irritated to supply information which he had sent to Harcourt in December 1880, but he responded almost immediately,

> My dear Mr Gladstone,
>
> You have desired me to furnish you with a note as to such a system of conducting Scottish affairs as will satisfy Scotland & put the system of Scottish administration on a satisfactory basis.
>
> What is asked for is very little, it has been asked, for a long time, & will certainly have to be given some day or another; and the Government that gives it will earn an abiding reputation in Scotland. It is not necessary to refer to the strong opinions in favour of such an office put forward by men of weight since the downfall of the Melville dynasty in 1827. It is sufficient for my purpose to go back no further than last year when there was a very active feeling on the subject. Before Easter that year a memorial asking for a Minister for Scotland was presented to you signed by nearly two thirds of the total number of Scottish members, while in addition to the signatories, there were then seven Scottish members in the ministry who each & all approved of the object of the memorial.[69] A still larger number would have signed had a seat in the Cabinet been made a condition of the office.

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[68] RP, MS 10022, f. 142, Gladstone to Rosebery dated December 18, 1882.

[69] I have been unable to trace this memorial in the Gladstone Papers at the British Library.

To this memorial I believe an answer promising prompt consideration was returned.

In June, a debate was raised by Lord Fife on the same subject in the House of Lords, when all the Scots Peers who spoke with the single exception of the Duke of Argyll, who blew neither hot nor cold & merely argued against the substitution of an under-secretary for the Lord Advocate, were warmly in favour of the proposal. Lord Granville wound up the debate with these words:

> "I hope my noble friend will be satisfied with my assurance that the fairest and fullest consideration will be given by Her Majesty's Government to the proposals which have been put forward by so large a number of representatives in the House of Commons and of Peers in this House."

In August 1881 I was appointed Under-Secretary of the Home Department, and your letter on that occasion conveyed to me, justly or unjustly, the impression that this was only a step in the direction desired by Scotland.

This is a concise narrative, omitting what is immaterial, of this matter as affecting the present administration.

Since then I have conducted Scottish affairs in connection with the Lord Advocate as well as I was able. But I trust I may be allowed to mention that I could neither have conducted them nor would Scotland have tolerated by them being so conducted by an under-secretary had it not been that I was reputed to possess (as indeed I believe I have possessed) the special confidence of both the Prime Minister & the Secretary of State, nor could I have done this without the loyal co-operation of the Lord Advocate. Had he been a man of narrow mind jealous of the intrusion of what might be considered an interloper he could easily and without positive action have rendered my tenure impossible. But an arrangement which depends on the accidental circumstances of particular individuals can neither be satisfactory nor permanent.

What is it then that is wanted? It may be briefly summarised under two heads. Firstly, that there should be a special transaction of Scottish business; secondly that the headship of that department should not be confined to members of the legal profession.

This latter point explains itself. It stands to reason that there should be no such restriction. Much of the misunderstanding with regard to this question has arisen from a misunderstanding as to the position of Lord Advocate. Persons outside politics have believed that as there was no other ostensible Scottish Minister that therefore he must be Minister for Scotland. That has never been the case. Lords Advocate have had more or less political influence according to their personal standing or their relations with the Secretary of State. But I

have asked Lords Moncrieff[70] & Young probably the two most eminent and most generally known of living Lords Advocate, and they have assured me that they never were Minister for Scotland. The fact is that the Lord Advocate has a position as a great officer of state and duties as a law officer and public prosecutor which are weighty and sufficient in themselves. If a new department for Scotland were created, the Lord Advocate of the day might often be the best person to conduct it, but it should not be of necessity presided over by the Lord Advocate. His functions & those of the Minister for Scotland need not and would not clash, any more than an under-secretary clashes with the Lord Advocate.

What then should be the position of the head of such a department? He should in my opinion be called Chief Secretary for Scotland, or Vice President of the Council for Scotland. This later title would open up however the question of the control of education north of the Tweed on which I do not now desire to enter. There is no doubt that the present system causes discontent, but a discussion of this point would carry one further than I wish to go. I think when one of the old state offices of Scotland such as the keepership of the Great or Privy Seal or the Clerk Registership becomes vacant it should be attached to & give its title to the office. The Great Seal, indeed, is not a life office any more than a Secretaryship of State, it has been accidentally preserved by its present owner. But this, of course is a merely titular question, and the question of the name is infinitely subordinate to the question of principle. If it were ever thought desirable that the Minister for Scotland should be in the Cabinet he could be given one of the sinecure Cabinet posts, so as not to increase the number of Cabinet offices. Indeed it has been often suggested that the Lord Privy Seal might preside over a Scottish department. But though I do not suppose that the Privy Seal is of necessity a Cabinet Office, I do think this would answer as a permanent arrangement, for I doubt if the Privy Seal could be held by a member of the House of Commons.

As to the staff of such a department, it would, of course, be necessary that the Lord Advocate should retain his separate position with regard to legal matters in Scotland. The legal patronage indeed which is at present in the hands of the Home Secretary should be handed over to the new Minister, who would necessarily have to be guided by the Lord Advocate. But what is of the highest importance

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[70] James Moncrieff (1811 - 1895), 1st Baron Moncrieff of Tullibole was an outstanding writer, speaker and statesman. He held the offices of Solicitor General for Scotland (1850), Lord Advocate (1851 - 52, 1852 - 5, 1859 - 66, and 1868 - 69) and Rector of Glasgow University (1868 - 71). His review of Macaulay's History in the Edinburgh Review [October, 1861] included an account of the Massacre of Glencoe which is now regarded as the definitive analysis of this dark event.

is the creation of some such permanent official as an under-secretary. At present there is no continuous tradition as to the management of affairs in Scotland.[71] Everyone who has to deal with them has to begin *de novo*. The details of Scottish business have been hitherto left very much to the Lord Advocate in the Home Office, and the Lord Advocate has had to make them out for himself, unless he could get at his predecessor or his predecessor's secretary. There is hardly any such thing as precedent in Scottish Affairs, a circumstance which might recommend itself to many people, but which is fatal to continuity of action.

Speaking generally, I should say that a permanent official and a very few clerks would be a sufficient staff for the office.

Of course the branch of the Home Office which has recently been established in Edinburgh would be attached to the new ministry which would also require an office in London.

The different Edinburgh boards should be placed under it: that is the Fishery Board, the Board of Supervision, the Board of Manufacturers, the Board of Lunacy, & the Prison Board. Some of these are at present under the Home Office and some under the Treasury. I am inclined to think that the constabulary should remain under the Home Office but as to that I express no positive opinion. The Minister would have to deal with questions of Local Government, poor law administration, prisons, asylums, fisheries, rivers, roads, mines, factories. He would in conjunction with the Lord Advocate be responsible for Scottish legislation. He would in fact be to Scotland much what the Chief Secretary is to Ireland under an ordinary Lord Lieutenancy.

Of course it may be said that all this can very easily be effected by simply appointing a Scottish Under-Secretary to the Home Office. But this is not so, because, putting aside the question of efficiency altogether, it would not satisfy the *amour propre* of the Scottish people. It would simply raise a cry for a minister, which if not granted by the present administration, would be granted by the next. I believe that the concession of this moderate boon is not merely an act of justice, but also an act of expediency from the point of view of administrative advantage and political tactics; while I venture to add that Scotland has earned it of the present Government.

Rosebery[72]

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[71] GP, Add MS 44628, f. 186, on his copy of this letter, Gladstone underlined this sentence and commented, "what affairs.[!]"

[72] Strangely, the original of this letter, which was most likely written on either December 20 or 21, 1882 is not in the Gladstone Papers. The above is a transcription of the printed version [for the use of the Cabinet] of this letter dated December 1882, GP, Add MS 44628, f. 186. Gladstone's underlining on his printed copy is preserved in this transcription. A fairly accurate copy exists in the Rosebery Papers, RP, MS 10022, f. 174.

Rosebery's actions were not simply motivated by the desire for personal advancement - though it is true that Rosebery would be the most appropriate selection for any new Scottish Office. Rosebery believed the current system for which he was partially responsible was no longer tenable. Rosebery believed that continuity was essential to effective government and as he noted in this memorandum, Scottish affairs were conducted by chance rather than by any fixed or consistent arrangement. A new office with a responsible minister would provide at least a basis for securing greater continuity.

As this letter demonstrates, he closely studied both the history and current management of Scottish affairs and clearly found these arrangements to be insufficient, inefficient and inequitable. Rosebery not only identified the problems of Scottish administration, he proposed solutions - namely the establishment of a new office with real power and direct responsibility. His 18 months in office gave him an insight into the practical mechanics of the Home Office. A Cabinet office was not demanded, but clearly Rosebery desired to see Scotland, like Ireland, have a direct voice in the Cabinet. Gladstone, as seen in his markings on this memorandum, was not convinced that a new office was required or justified.

On December 21, Gladstone thanked Rosebery for his memorandum and advised him to send it "in the first instance to Sir W Harcourt. He <u>is</u> the Minister for Scotland."[73] This cut Rosebery deeply because he feared that his privilege of direct communication with Gladstone had ended. In the same letter, Gladstone again complained that Rosebery had "never up to this time supplied either any abatement of the evil or any plan of remedy."[74] Rosebery now realised that they were working from a different set of assumptions. He responded immediately on December 22,

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[73] RP, MS 10022, f. 146, Gladstone to Rosebery dated December 21, 1882.

[74] Ibid.

> I omitted three circumstances which conduced to the impression which I received from your original letter that a new development was intended in the conduct of Scottish business.
>
> The first was that at Easter or Whitsuntide 1881,[75] I drew up for Harcourt at his request a memorandum on the way in which Scottish business had hitherto been conducted. This was before I was in office & made me fancy that the Government was considering the subject.
>
> The second was that just previously a very numerously signed memorial from Scottish members had been presented to you urging the appointment of a minister for Scotland.
>
> The third was that in June 1881 six weeks before my appointment, on a motion of Lord Fife's in the House of Lords that it was desirable to have a minister for Scotland, all the Scottish peers who spoke with the single exception of the Duke of Argyll warmly supported that view of the case. ... I entered upon office to secure attention & a definite department for my country: I shall leave it because I have failed.[76]

Rosebery was not unreasonable. Given the above considerations and his 18 months in office, both he and Scotland deserved better treatment. After reading this letter, light dawned for Gladstone. He wrote the following docket to Hamilton on Rosebery's letter,

> No 1. I never saw?
> 2. Please Send d[ecember].23 [1882]

To which Hamilton replied,

> 1. Sir William Harcourt has recollection of some such memn - & will try and find it. No record of its having been sent to you.
> 2. Herewith with memn of the then Lord Advocate.[77] I add a letter

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[75] Presumably Rosebery means Christmas 1880 when he composed his memorandum to Harcourt.

[76] GP, Add MS 44288, f. 135, Rosebery to Gladstone dated December 22, 1882.

[77] GP, Add MS 44626, f. 102, printed memorandum [for use of the Cabinet] written by John McLaren, the Lord Advocate, dated February 22, 1881. McLaren was generally opposed to any change in the management of Scottish Affairs.

from 1880[78] from Sir W. H. after conversation.[79]

A few days earlier, confounded by Rosebery, Gladstone had complained to his close confidant, Lord Granville,

> I am sorry to say that Rosebery has inflicted upon me a set of letters which appear to me astonishingly foolish, about the neglect of his country, the necessities of his position, & the like: a tempest in a tea kettle. It is marvellous how a man of such character & such gifts can be so silly.[80]

Gladstone by his own admission and by common consensus had difficulty placing events and people in a proper balance. Rosebery presented Gladstone with a conundrum. A rising aristocrat may merit a minor office, a machine politician demands a sinecure, but a statesman in the making requires careful nurturing. Rosebery fitted into all three categories. Gladstone had a predilection for noblemen with unproven or questionable talent (e.g. Argyll and Lansdowne) and an aversion to machine politicians (e.g. Chamberlain). Rosebery represented both the new and old modes of politics. He was one of the brightest young Liberals and Scotland was a consistent bulwark of Liberalism. Very little was required to satisfy both parties, but Gladstone was ever reluctant to promote Rosebery and placate Scotland. Wisely, Granville recommended conciliation. In his reply to Gladstone (later forwarded to Rosebery), Granville advised,

> I cannot help thinking that, if you gave him some more definite assurances of considering the Scotch question while reserving perfect freedom of action, & were to say only one tenth of what you have said

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[78] GP, Add MS 44196, f. 107, Harcourt to Gladstone dated December 6, 1880.

[79] GP, Add MS 44288, f. 135, docket appended to Rosebery's letter to Gladstone dated December 22, 1882.

[80] Agatha Ramm (ed.), The Political Correspondence of Mr Gladstone and Lord Granville, 1876 - 1886 (2 vols., Oxford, 1962), vol. i, p. 471, Gladstone to Granville dated December 19, 1882.

> to others as to the standard by which you judge him, this affair so annoying to you and so likely to be damaging to him, might be satisfactorily settled.[81]

Adopting a more conciliatory tone on December 23, Gladstone recounted an experience from his own career in which he saw a clear parallel,

> I took office in Aug 41 as V.P. Board of Trade. Economical studies were absolutely new to me: but I set to work with all my might. New Lights began to flow in. In Jan or Feb 42, Peel concocted an amendment of the Corn Laws to which he got the assent of the Cabinet & then made it known to me. In my opinion it was insufficient as far as I could presume to form an opinion. This being so I requested him to let me resign: I was an 'underling' & it never struck me that my disappearing could be of the slightest significance. He was (I must say) very sulky and would hardly speak to me beyond saying, "you should consider whether or not to break up the Government." I left him rather dumbfounded & did not sleep that night so well as usual. But on the next forenoon I wrote to him and told him I should continue where I was: not retracting what I had said but following what I thought to be the higher duty.[82]

Gladstone did not require Rosebery to concede a point of honour but gave him a way to maintain his integrity while remaining in office. Gladstone also wanted to calm the waters without committing himself to any new arrangement for Scottish affairs - he was trying to buy time and keep Rosebery in the Government.

Rosebery turned to Harcourt for advice and on December 23, he

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[81] Ramm (ed.), Political Correspondence of Gladstone and Granville, 1876 - 1886, vol. i, p. 476, Granville to Gladstone dated December 23, 1882.

[82] RP, MS 10022, f. 152, Gladstone to Rosebery dated December 23, 1882. In the postscript to this letter, Gladstone provided an insight into his own character that some later historians would have thought impossible, "I may have a difficulty putting a rational construction on the conduct of men from time to time, but I regard it as a base & commonly a misleading mode of escape to ascribe it to unworthy motives. In this case it would be monstrous."

summarised his case.[83] Harcourt, however, construed Rosebery's actions as driven by a desire for Cabinet office and he expressed these views to Gladstone on December 24th,[84]

> I have long been aware that [Rosebery's] mind has been bent on a Cabinet place. When the Duke of Argyll resigned last year R was bitterly disappointed at the appointment of Carlingford.[85] He & his wife spoke to me with so much vehemence on the subject & with so much measure of wrath & curse that I wrote to Granville on the subject at Easter 1881. You probably saw the correspondence at the time. There was then no question of a 'Scotch Minister' or the wrongs of the 'nation he serves' it was solely a question of personal position. If R had entered the Cabinet as Privy Seal he would have been quite content to allow Scotland to remain on the old footing.
>
> When you proposed to me that R shd come to the H.O. as Under-Secretary (though you were aware of the administrative difficulties which it involved.) I accepted the proposal (1) because you wished it (2) because I hoped it would satisfy R. (3) because I thought it would be a sop to Scottish aspirations.
>
> Since that time I have not heard a word of complaint from R. as to Scotch business whether in or out of the House of Commons.[86]

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[83] "In the present arrangements nothing is thought of for Scotland in anyway, either with regard to a Scottish department, or a definite arrangement for Scottish business, which I had reason to believe were in contemplation when I accepted my present appointment. Mr Gladstone has given me to understand that nothing of the sort has ever been imagined and has desired me to furnish him with a scheme which will 'Not be neglected by the Cabinet.'" Harcourt MSS, Dep. 54, f. 51, Rosebery to Harcourt dated December 23, 1882.

[84] Harcourt's unexpurgated comments were recorded by his son, 'Lulu' (Lewis Harcourt**), in his diary, "H.S.'s [i.e. W. V. Harcourt] only comment was that [Rosebery] was a conceited little ass and he should like if he got a chance to kick his bottom. So would a good many other people!" Lewis Harcourt MSS, Dep. 350, f. 140, diary entry for December 23, 1882.

[85] Argyll left the Cabinet over Gladstone's 1881 Irish Land Bill. To fill this vacancy, Gladstone appointed an Irishman, Lord Carlingford [Chichester Fortescue] (1823 - 1898), to help with the drafting of the Irish Land Bill. Hamilton, Brett and Lewis Harcourt all recorded Rosebery's irritation at neither being selected nor consulted with regard to this post. This reaction might not have been solely due to Rosebery's ambition. As Brett later noted, "there is very little doubt that at that time certain members of the Gladstone family led everyone to believe that [Rosebery] would soon be offered a seat in the Cabinet." Reginald Brett, Viscount Esher, Extracts from Journals, 1880 - 95 (Privately Printed, Cambridge, 1914), p. 37, entry dated November 7, 1884.

[86] GP, Add MS 44197, f. 158, Harcourt to Gladstone dated December 24, 1882. A few days later, Harcourt wrote in more sympathetic terms, "As to the Scotch Minister, that, Rosebery admitted to me is rather a sentimental grievance - but sentimental grievances are sometimes strongest of all." GP, Add MS 44197, f. 171, Harcourt to Gladstone dated December 29, 1882.

This letter is striking considering it is written by the Home Secretary who had primary responsibility for Scottish affairs. This extract demonstrates the general low level of concern for Scottish affairs and Harcourt's propensity for insensitivity. Harcourt was brusque and often acted without considering the consequences of his frankness (this explains why he never made it to the top of the 'greasy pole'). In choosing Harcourt as a confidant and go-between, Rosebery made a poor selection. Despite Harcourt's intervention, Gladstone still gave Rosebery the benefit of his doubts concerning his motivation.[87]

In public, Rosebery maintained his firm allegiance to the Government directly contradicting the criticisms which he made in his letters to Gladstone. On December 29, 1882, with Herbert Gladstone in attendance, Rosebery claimed, "there never was a Government in the history of the country so united and so strong in the confidence of the people as the Government was at this moment."[88] Rosebery had spent the preceding month trying to convince Gladstone that such confidence was either waning or non-existent. For those who were privy to this private wrangle, these public expressions made Rosebery appear to be self-serving and hypocritical. Yet, he was in fact the consummate politician - pursuing his agenda privately while convincing the public that all was well.

Rosebery visited Gladstone at Hawarden on January 4th to 6th, 1883, after which Gladstone believed the conflict to be settled.[89] The immediate

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[87] Nonetheless, he described Rosebery to Harcourt as, "A most singular case of strong self-delusion: a vein of foreign matter which runs straight across a clear and vigorous intellect, and a high toned character." Harcourt MSS, Dep 8, f. 181, Gladstone to Harcourt dated December 28, 1882.

[88] Rosebery, "Speech at Peebles," December 29, 1882, in The Scotsman, January 1, 1883, p. 3. When Rosebery was introduced, he "was enthusiastically cheered, the audience rising en masse."

[89] Rosebery considered that the subject was still unresolved. He noted in his diary on January 6, 1883, "At 10.50 took my departure, not a syllable having been said about the subject of our previous correspondence and the object of my visit!" Crewe, vol. i, p. 165.

crisis had ended but the question remains, was Rosebery's concern for Scotland sincere or was it a means of cloaking his ambition? The answer is probably yes to both. Firstly, considering his overall career, the earnestness of his commitment to Scotland was clearly evident, and largely through his initiative, Scottish affairs were better managed. Secondly, the timing of this controversy makes it seem that Rosebery was restless as a junior minister and Scotland was the best available means to secure advancement. While this episode demonstrated Rosebery's ambition, its implications are far more wideranging. It underlined his deep connection with Scottish affairs, and revealed some of the qualities of his character which prefigured his eventual decline and fall. Rosebery was over-sensitive and he was eager to maintain public popularity. In this concern, Rosebery succeeded: he was cheered wildly wherever he went.

Rosebery's private battle with Gladstone ultimately spurred the Government to consider taking action. In March 1883, the Government officially considered the management of Scottish affairs. On March 7, 1883, Hamilton summarised Rosebery's objections,

> Notes on Rosebery & Scotch Administration
> I. Rosebery finds that the present arrangements for the conduct of Scotch business work very unsatisfactory; - he is supposed by the Scotch public to be responsible for it, but he has no real responsibility, which practically still rests with the Home Secretary - and he feels strongly the necessity for making better provision in this respect. Great importance is attached in Scotland to the creation of a separate and central Scotch Dept. presided over by a member of the govt. who is invested with real responsibility. Almost every recent speech made in Scotland lately has referred to the want of such a department; and every approving mention of the subject is loudly cheered. The people in Scotland naturally look to Rosebery to get this done; and he feels hurt that difficulties should be raised about a matter affecting Scotch interests, which he has himself so much at heart, and which he thinks have a special claim to favourable treatment by the present Government and particularly Mr Gladstone.
> II. In addition to this, he is evidently disappointed about his own

position and disheartened about the prospects of his advancement in the future.

He lays great stress on Mr Gladstone's allusion to the temporary nature of his office - (six months being specified) - when he accepted his present post at the Home Office; and he has failed to elicit from Mr Gladstone an explanation of what was intended by the allusion. In attempting to find an explanation himself, Rosebery argues thus: It cannot have had reference to the Scotch arrangements, because Mr Gladstone virtually disclaims any knowledge of what the wants of Scotland are, or how those wants, if any, can be better met. The allusion must therefore have had reference to his (Rosebery's) speedy advancement. If so, the expectations which he was led to form have not been fulfilled; and he feels that in Scotland, where considerable things have been expected of him, the omission to promote him is being put down to his having been 'tried and found wanting.'

Under these circumstances, he is anxious to be relieved of his present post; and I fear he will resign unless something is done to place Scotch business on a different footing, and unless some expectation is held out to him of promotion either in connection with some new arrangement for the conduct of Scotch affairs or in some other department.

There can be no doubt that such a step would be nothing short of deplorable.

(1) It would be no small loss to the govt. especially in Scotland.

(2) It would be a heavy personal blow to Mr Gladstone.

(3) Considering the close relations between Rosebery and Mr Gladstone, and the obligations under which they mutually be to one another, it would create something almost approaching to a scandal, were they now to part company.

(4) It would greatly damage Rosebery's political career.

In this matter great allowance must be made for Rosebery's peculiar temperament and excessive sensitiveness; for the remarkable position he has made for himself not only in Scotland but in Great Britain (due no doubt to a great extent to his intimate association with Mr Gladstone); and for the encouraging manner in which Mr Gladstone has (I believe) always spoken to Rosebery.

After so recent a reconstitution of the administration, the difficulty of doing anything to rearrange Scotch business or to place Rosebery in a different and better position is of course very great; but it is a question whether this difficulty ought not to be surmounted in order to obviate greater difficulties.

There are objections to almost every suggestion that can be made; but as a temporary arrangement, would it be possible to give Rosebery the Privy Seal (out of the Cabinet) and make him responsible for Scotch business, investing him with all the responsibility for which now rests with the Home Secretary?

Such an arrangement would
1. Not necessitate the creation of any new office.
2. it would favourably give great satisfaction in Scotland and at any rate for the present put an end to the demand for a separate Dept. & Scotch Minister.
3. It would remove the difficulties about Rosebery himself.
4. It would give work for the Privy seal.

EWH 7/3/83[90]

As Hamilton notes, Rosebery and Scotland were inextricably linked. Rosebery and Gladstone were mutually indebted. A severance of their close relations had to be avoided. This memorandum is an example of the way in which Rosebery's friends who were highly placed attempted to influence events in his favour. Hamilton was on intimate terms with both Gladstone and Rosebery, and he was consistently sympathetic to Rosebery (as seen in this memorandum and throughout his extensive diaries). If Rosebery were promoted (which Hamilton suggests), many difficulties would disappear and the cost would be minimal. Gladstone, however, did not act upon Hamilton's memorandum. Scotland and Rosebery were again put off.

Shortly thereafter, Rosebery composed the following memorandum which was later circulated in the Cabinet. I am quoting these memoranda in full because to date they have not been fully published. It was his last appeal as Under-Secretary and it is striking for its depth of thought and sincerity,

Private & Confidential

Minister for Scotland

No 1

Further memorandum by Lord Rosebery.

Sir William Harcourt,

[90] GP, Add MS 44189, f. 200, Hamilton memorandum marked Secret dated March 7, 1883.

I have been favoured with a sight of Sir R. Lingen's[91] very fair and moderate commentary on the paper which I drew up in December last on the subject of a Minister for Scotland.[92]

The main point of Sir R. Lingen's argument is, I take it, contained in the following paragraph:-

"If a Minister, independent of the Home Office, were granted, and of Cabinet rank, this would practically be the creation of a new Secretary of State for a strictly local interest within Great Britain itself, surely a grave going back from the Act of Union. If the new Minister were independent, but not of Cabinet rank, Scotch interests would no longer be represented like those of England by a Secretary of State."

My reply on this is, firstly, I have not advocated a Minister of Cabinet rank, although, of course, it is a supreme advantage for any Department to be represented in the Cabinet. But secondly were the Minister of Cabinet rank, and the arrangement such as Sir R. Lingen proposes it would be so far 'from a grave going back from the Act of Union' that it would be a direct reversion to the system in force at the time of the Union and for forty years afterwards, the abrogation of which was never contemplated at the time of the Union, and would not have been tolerated. The Secretaryship for Scotland was only forfeited by the rebellion of 1745.[93]

So far as to what I conceive to be the main contention of Sir R. Lingen, let me refer to one or two minor points.

It is not quite fair to quote Lord Advocate Moncrieff, or, indeed any Lord Advocate, on this subject; because a Lord Advocate is, or thinks he is, bound to see that his office suffers no abatement in his hands. But the opinion of Lord Moncrieff, since he ceased to be Lord Advocate, has been strongly in favour of some new arrangement as regards Scotch business. He promised to send me a Memorial on the subject last year, but I suppose forgot to do so.

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[91] Sir Ralph Robert Wheeler Lingen (1819 - 1905) was Permanent Secretary to the Treasury (1870 - 85) where according to his obituary [The Times, July 24, 1905, p. 10] he was "a strict economist and a watchful guardian of the public purse." He had a great ability to say 'No' to schemes for increased expenditure. He was knighted in 1878 and created Baron Lingen in 1885. He and Rosebery again met when Lingen was a member of the London County Council (1890 - 92).

[92] Lingen's memorandum [GP, Add MS 44629, f. 14, dated February 26, 1883] was printed and circulated to the Cabinet. Though he deprecated the expense involved in creating a new office, Lingen admitted, "Such an appointment is said to have been asked for a long time by all parties, and to be certain to have to be conceded some day, with the result that the Government which gives it will earn an abiding reputation in Scotland." Gladstone highlighted this passage in his copy.

[93] This is not strictly true. The Secretaryship, which was not continuously filled from 1707 to 1745, was allowed to remain vacant after the '45. This is a testimonial to the Marquess of Tweeddale's incompetence, rather than a punishment for the Jacobite rising.

The question of patronage is one that comes so long after the question of principle that it is not necessary here to advert to it. It is a detail, and with other details need not be discussed unless it is intended to make a new departure. But I may notice the criticisms that my Minute is not clear. I think Sir R. Lingen's difficulty arises from the fact, that he believes all Scottish legal patronage to be in the hands of the Lord Advocate. This is not so. Some of it is, and this I would not disturb; but most of it is in the hands of the Home Secretary, who may or may not consult the Lord Advocate. It is this latter patronage which I should transfer; the former I had no intention of touching.

As regards the boards in Edinburgh, it is sufficient to say that one of them - the Fishery Board - has already been remodelled; that the Board of Supervision will have to be remodelled; that I was engaged in a scheme for reconstruction for this and another board for motives of administrative and financial economy, when circumstances put a stop to it. I know it to be the opinion of the most experienced member, and I think I may add, members, of those boards, that a reorganisation is necessary for the express purpose, if no other, of having a Minister to represent them in Parliament who should be officially a member of the Board and acquainted with its work.

As regards the case of Ireland, and the extract from Mr Trevelyan's speech, I have only to say that there is happily no parallel possible between the cases of Ireland and Scotland, and that the fact may be assumed, that the Government of Ireland is imperfect, without declaring that a new department for Scotland is inexpedient. But if it is admitted that it is desirable to have a separate administration for Ireland how much stronger is the case for Scotland when Sir R. Lingen says, "the civil and religious constitution of Scotland differs from that of England in so many essential particulars that separate administration is to a great extent a necessity."

I do not know if there are any further points for me to notice. I do not understand Sir R. Lingen to dispute the principle, but the application; that is to say, he admits that Scotland cannot be treated like a group of English counties, but is of an opinion that an under-secretary would meet the requirements of the case.

To that I would answer that, for many reasons, one of which would be the question of dignity, the other that of direct access to the Cabinet, the present arrangement, by which Scotland is under the direct charge of the Home Secretary, would be both more efficacious and more popular in Scotland than any such scheme. But, in fact, all arrangements that can fairly be urged against my proposal can be urged against an under-secretaryship and many others. A Lord Advocate must be a man of mark. There is no such probability in the case of an under-secretary, and it is quite certain that both Scotland and the Secretary of State would prefer as the representative of Scottish business a man of mark to one of none. Indeed, Scotland, at any rate,

> would not recognize the Under-Secretary but would recur to the Lord Advocate. March 16, 1883 R[osebery].[94]

Several points are worth highlighting. Rosebery implies that only a Cabinet Office would truly satisfy the Scottish people and secure the equitable disposal of Scottish affairs. Previously he was content with a sub-Cabinet office. He knew first-hand how important a direct link to the Cabinet was and how frustrating it was to speak through an intermediary. He did not want his successor, who would not have his personal power, to be so limited by the office. Secondly, Ireland had been used to undermine Scotland's claims when in fact Rosebery believed that the Irish example highlighted the need for separate Scottish administration ("if it is admitted that it is desirable to have a separate administration for Ireland how much stronger is the case for Scotland"). Irish issues tended to overshadow Scottish and Welsh concerns rather than highlight them.

In addition, this memorandum demonstrates Rosebery's forensic skills. In the Lords, on the platform, or on paper, Rosebery used compelling and forceful logic to present his case and convert his audience. He had a deep understanding of the system of Scottish management. He realised that the problem had a practical and a sentimental aspect, and therefore any effective solution must address both of these elements. In 1881 he accepted a provisional arrangement for himself and Scotland, but by 1883 he refused to compromise on either point - both he and Scotland deserved better.

Gladstone reviewed the relevant papers on March 17, 1883, but the prospects did not seem bright.[95] Harcourt's views were printed with

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[94] GP, Add MS 44629, f. 22, Rosebery's memorandum [printed for Cabinet use] dated March 16, 1883.

[95] Hamilton noted in his diary, "The Rosebery business does not promise any better. Mr G had read through all the papers on the subject of the Scotch Minister and also my memorandum stating the situation. I am afraid after reading them Mr G is not more

Rosebery's memorandum. He was sympathetic but unenthusiastic. "I think, then, there is a clear case in favour of an additional and separate lay Minister whose attention shall be given exclusively to Scotch business ... The question remains, What is to be the status of such a Minister?"[96] Gladstone was not very sympathetic. As seen by his manuscript notes, he was concerned that any new office must have sufficient work to justify its creation and expense. Harcourt realised - no doubt due to Rosebery's campaign - that sentimental considerations were relevant and conceded that a new office should be created,

> Between a Secretary of State which is too much, and an under-secretary which (having regard to the sentiment which prevails) is too little. I do not however conceal from myself the fact that the Scotch would always think themselves aggrieved and neglected whenever their president was not in the Cabinet.[97]

Apart from this memorandum, and brief discussions in Cabinet, no action was taken. Rosebery's patience had expired.[98]

As the drama reached its fifth and final act, Rosebery's close ally Donaldson intervened. In late May 1883, he lunched with Lady Rosebery and Mrs Gladstone at Lansdowne House, to plead Rosebery's case.[99] In addition,

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disposed to take a less unfavourable view of Rosebery's action. The impression produced upon Mr G was that in all his administrative experience he never remembered to have seen a big question more 'irrationally handled' by a clever man." Bahlman (ed.), Hamilton's Dairy, 1880 - 1885, vol. ii, p. 411, entry dated March 18, [1883].

[96] GP, Add MS 44629, f. 24, printed Harcourt memorandum dated March 25, 1883.

[97] GP, Add MS 44629, f. 24, printed Harcourt memorandum dated March 25, 1883.

[98] Rosebery wrote to Hamilton, "I must categorically tell whoever it may concern, that for some time past I have ceased to have any connection with Scottish affairs except such as my predecessors in the office of Under-Secretary have had." Hamilton MSS, Add MS 48617, f. 43, Rosebery to Hamilton dated March 18, 1883.

[99] "After Lunch we went into the library and Lady Rosebery left me alone with Mrs G. Mrs G at once commenced on political subjects ... [She said that] Her husband had the strongest attachment to you and that he looked on you as the man who should carry out his ideas in the future that you possessed very great ability & that your time would certainly

Donaldson composed a long and detailed account of Rosebery's merits which he posted to Gladstone.[100] This is a typical way in which the Rosebery machine puffed Rosebery. An ally meets with a member of the Gladstone family and expresses his views about Rosebery which he assumes will be passed onto Gladstone. The only evidence of Rosebery's reaction to this interference is an undated note written on a blue envelope, "Professor Donaldson's communication to Mr G unknown & unauthorized by me as to which when I heard of it I expressed as civilly as I could my strong disapprobation."[101] No reply to this rebuke (if indeed it was made) exists in the Rosebery Papers, but it is reasonable to suggest that while Rosebery objected to Donaldson's means, he agreed with his aims.

Rosebery finally resigned on June 6, 1883 after Harcourt admitted in the Commons that it would be more logical that his under-Secretary should sit in the lower house.[102] Resignation was inevitable but it was not detrimental to either Rosebery or Scotland. Rosebery's resignation forced the Government to reconsider Scottish management because the previous arrangement had only worked because of his personal involvement - an ordinary under-secretary could not satisfy the Scots. Secondly, the Government had to coax Rosebery back into office and another under-

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come ... Then she went to Scotch affairs and said that the Cabinet's having proposed a Scotch bill ought to be satisfactory to you. I said that there was no guarantee that you were to have control of all Scotch affairs. She said that that was absolutely certain & that you & you alone were to have the entire control of all Scotch business." RP, MS 10014, f. 10, Donaldson to Rosebery dated June 2, 1883.

[100] Donaldson was not subtle, "I feel certain that no more valuable service could be rendered to Scotland than by placing [Rosebery] in the Cabinet and giving him the control of Scotch affairs." GP, Add MS 44481, f. 103, Donaldson to Gladstone dated May 31, 1883. Donaldson forwarded a rough copy of his letter [RP, MS 10014, f. 15] to Rosebery.

[101] RP, MS 10014, f. 14, n.d., note by Rosebery for his own records.

[102] In response to Cross's question on Civil Service Estimates, Harcourt replied that he "wishes very much for the assistance to do the work [in the Commons]. The arrangement now existing in the House of Lords was never intended to be permanent: it was made to meet the exigencies of the Scotch members." Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 279, col. 1410, May 31, 1883.

secretaryship would not suffice. In one sense, Rosebery achieved more by his resignation than he could have possibly secured by remaining in office - he forced Gladstone's hand and within a year a bill was drafted to restore the office of the Secretary for Scotland.

Restoration of the Secretaryship of Scotland

On July 21, 1883, Rosebery's service to Scotland was recognized when he became a burgess of Edinburgh at age 36! Rosebery was introduced as the man, "most closely identified in the public mind [with the] improved administration of public business in Scotland."[103] This was the impression which Rosebery had succeeded in cultivating since Midlothian. Accepting this honour, Rosebery used this platform to present Scotland's national demands,

> This then is not the whisper of faction - it is the voice of a nation, the calm deliberate unmistakeable voice of a nation which makes no selfish or unworthy demands. What it asks is only for the welfare and efficiency of this country, wedded for better or for worse with the fortunes of the Empire.[104]

No longer constrained by office, Rosebery pressed the Government by galvanising Scots to demand a change to the *status quo*. Implicit in this statement is Rosebery's defence of his own resignation as being motivated by a pure love for Scotland rather than by selfish ambition. Rosebery, unlike his contemporary Irish counterparts, directly linked Scotland's demands to the greater harmony of the United Kingdom and the Empire. He employed emotional and rational rhetoric to press Scotland's case. For example,

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[103] Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," July 21, 1883, in The Scotsman, July 23, p. 3. The leader of The Scotsman, p. 4, noted "but the best work Lord Rosebery has done has consisted not so much in results achieved, as in showing how the much greater work may be done, and how it ought to be grappled with and carried through."

[104] Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," July 21, 1883, in The Scotsman, July 23, p. 3.

addressing English politicians who maintained that if Scotland had a minister Yorkshire might as well have a minister, Rosebery asserted,

> If Yorkshire has a totally different system of church government, a totally different church history, totally different church traditions; if she has a different system of law administered by separate courts of judges. If she has a totally different magistracy, a totally different system of local government, a totally different system of educational tradition and educational practices, then I say by all means give a minister to Yorkshire.[105]

From this standpoint, Scotland had a far better case than Ireland or Wales for a separate minister, and more so it was a demand grounded in loyalty rather than rooted in rebellion. In this very important and well publicised address, Rosebery then dismissed the objection - put forward repeatedly by Gladstone - that the office did not merit a salary of £2,000 per year. Rosebery maintained that the new minister "will have a great work of organisation. He will also have to constitute a new office, the most difficult of all work; and in the third place, he will have to perform impossibilities to meet exaggerated standards."[106] In this regard, he could claim experience.

Rosebery's resignation did not blight his budding career. Almost immediately, Gladstone offered him the Presidency of the proposed Scottish Local Government Board[107] to induce him to delay his planned world tour,

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[105] Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," July 21, 1883, in The Scotsman, July 23, p. 3. The comparison of Scotland to Yorkshire was not new. In July, 1711, Daniel Defoe wrote to the Earl of Oxford [Harley], "Scotland No More Requires a Secretary Than Yorkshire or Wales," in G. H. Healy (ed.), The Letters of Daniel Defoe (Oxford, 1955), p. 336.

[106] Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," July 21, 1883, in The Scotsman, July 23, p. 3.

[107] Though this bill was destroyed by the Lords, it was an important recognition that a Scottish body could better manage Scottish affairs than Westminster. Even though Rosebery rejected Gladstone's offer to head the board, he still spoke on its behalf, "It is in the interests of Scotland that it should be passed; it is the desire of Scotland that it should be passed. [If you reject it, you have] made a great mistake in gauging public opinion in Scotland." Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 283, col. 1477, August 21, 1883.

> If you thus go wandering through fields of earth air & sea, what is to become of Scotch affairs & the movement to which you have been the point of effective departure, & which to all appearances is on the point of arriving successfully at its terminus. In other words I think Fate marks you for the office which Parliament is evidently about to create. It is at your disposal; we hope you will accept it on its establishment (which Parliamentary experts anticipate with an undoubting confidence): will not Scotland kick if you decline, & cannot Australia wait awhile for some unencumbered interval of your life?[108]

Gladstone clearly gives Rosebery credit for initiating and pressing Scotland's case. The offer to create this new board (which was never created) was a clear recognition of Rosebery's importance to the Liberal ministry. Gladstone was willing to create a new agency to govern Scotland in order to appease Rosebery and reunite him to the Government. With regard to Scotland, Rosebery's efforts had broken the inertia which had characterised the management of Scottish affairs: change was not far distant. This appeal was unsuccessful and Rosebery's reply was startling,

> House of Lords, July 30th, 1883.
> My dear Mr Gladstone,
>
> I have just returned from Chevening and found your very kind letter, for which many thanks. But it is just because this is an 'unencumbered interval' in my life that I wish to go to Australia. I am still young, my children are still younger, and each year will diminish my opportunities.
>
> I will not profess to have put aside the possibility of the Scottish Ministership being offered me. But I have weighed the matter carefully, and have come to a distinct conclusion. Before I mention that conclusion, however, let me thank you cordially for your offer, and the terms in which it is conveyed.
>
> In the first place, I have been so much the advocate for the office being formed that, if I should accept it, I am open to the accusation, which has been freely urged in the candid press, of having pressed for it in order that I might fill it myself. I do not indeed attach much weight to the character of such imputations. But if I had felt myself free to take it, I should not have spoken at Edinburgh as I did. I there put on record my view of the necessity for a Minister in terms which

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[108] RP, MS 10022, f. 225, Gladstone to Rosebery dated July 29, 1883.

> I could not have used had I not thought myself precluded from taking it: and it has for some little time been my intention if I made that speech to also make my tour. I am not conscious of any unworthy motive in advocating a Scottish Office. ... There are other minor considerations which I need not intrude upon you now. They are swallowed up in two greater ones. One of these is that in my opinion the first Scottish Minister, in justice to Scotland, the Lord Advocate and himself, should be a Cabinet Minister. At any rate, I have always been clear that I could not be an efficient Minister for Scotland without a direct voice in the Cabinet. The other is personal, and it is this: that I have made up my mind never to re-enter the Government except as a member of the Cabinet.[109] I can quite understand that you will think this very presumptuous on my part. But the fact is that for office, *qua office*, I do not greatly care. I am convinced that for me there is no middle term of usefulness between that of absolute independence and Cabinet office. As absolutely independent, I hold a position in Scotland, of which I do not think so highly as some others may, but one which I greatly cherish. As a Cabinet Minister, I should hold a position in Great Britain which it is an honour to covet. But by accepting office outside the Cabinet, I lose both positions. On that point I have some experience to guide me.
>
> I hope I have made myself clear. I value my independence and its advantages much, and perhaps too much, but at any rate so much that I will never surrender it again except for the position which ought to be preferable even to independence such as mine: nor should I surrender it then with indecent alacrity. Now I know your views on this point, and it is for that reason that I consider the next six or eight months as an 'unencumbered interval': and indeed as regards office I regard the rest of my life in much the same light. I am, therefore, about to fulfil a long cherished purpose, and I feel that I can do it without any sacrifice of private duty or public advantage.
> With renewed thanks, believe me, y[ours]aff[ectionatel]y, AR[110]

Independent of office, Rosebery's language, unlike in some of his earlier memoranda, is frank and unequivocal. Rosebery delighted in being independent yet influential. His agenda is again two-fold, personal and

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[109] Hamilton later explained, "I am sure R has constantly had Pitt before him as his political type. I know he made Pitt an early study in life: his uncle's book [Stanhope's Life of Pitt] was one of the books that used to delight him at Eton. I have little doubt that when R declined to continue to hold the undersecretaryship at the Home Office, he remarked that Pitt at the early age of 23 said he would never accept a subordinate situation." Bahlman (ed.), Hamilton's Diary, 1885 - 1906, p. 115, entry for April 19, 1890.

[110] GP, Add MS 44288, f. 175, Rosebery to Gladstone dated July 30, 1883.

Scottish. His rejection of subordinate office for himself can obscure the point that for the first time he explicitly states that a sub-cabinet office is insufficient for Scottish affairs. Even the Chief Secretaryship for Ireland was not, by right, a Cabinet Office.[111] By this criterion, the proposed Scottish Local Government Board was far short of the mark both for Rosebery and for Scotland. This letter is a landmark in Rosebery's career and in the history of Scotland - it assured that Rosebery would soon sit in the Cabinet and that a Cabinet-level office would soon be created for Scotland.

Rosebery's resignation naturally caused concern in Scotland. While Holmes Ivory believed that Rosebery's resignation would strengthen his political position, Ivory admitted,

> There is a feeling of deep regret and sorrow from Scotland for which you have done so much. I do trust that you will still take as chief an interest as ever in the unhappy country whose affairs are so hopelessly neglected and mismanaged.[112]

After Rosebery refused Gladstone's invitation to head the Scottish Local Government Board, Cooper expressed his anxiety, "Scotland has claims upon you; your future is as important to her as it is to yourself and you do her an injury when you put yourself back."[113] As noted above, Rosebery's refusal was not injurious but rather beneficial to Scotland.

While Rosebery was touring the Colonies, the local government board was quickly forgotten and agitation grew for the restoration of the Secretary for Scotland. In December 1883, Ivory wrote to Hamilton, "There is a very strong feeling on the Scottish Minister question. If we could only have Lord

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[111] Though it is true that Ireland was guaranteed a voice in the Cabinet through either the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland or the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

[112] RP, MS 10037, f. 88, Ivory to Rosebery dated June 6, 1883.

[113] RP, MS 10010, f. 197, Cooper to Rosebery dated August 12, 1883.

R back in Scotch business it would mean a great many votes at next election not only in Midlothian but all over Scotland."[114] Rosebery's power was national not merely local. His absence was conspicuous when the Convention of Royal Burghs met in Edinburgh on January 16, 1884. Representatives of all parties, under the leadership of Lord Lothian(**), petitioned for the restoration of the Secretaryship for Scotland.[115] Later in 1884, when the Government introduced the Secretary for Scotland Bill, Rosebery took a leading role in drafting the bill and moving it through the House of Lords. After a year's delay, Salisbury's care-taker Government restored the Scottish Secretaryship in 1885 giving the Scots some of the substance of Home Rule.[116] Salisbury offered the post to the Duke of Richmond and Gordon in the following terms,

> The work is not very heavy - the dignity (measured by salary) is the same as your present office - but measured by the expectations of the people of Scotland it is approaching to archangelic. We want a big man to float it - especially as there is so much sentiment about it. I think you seem [cut] out by nature to be the man. Lothian's health would not be up to it - Balfour of Burleigh & Dalrymple are too insignificant. The Scotch people would declare we were despising Scotland & treating her as if she was a West Indian colony. It really is a matter where the effulgence of two dukedoms and the best salmon river in Scotland will go far.[117]

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[114] GP, Add MS 44484, f. 247, Ivory to Hamilton dated December 17, 1883.

[115] Lord Aberdeen moved the first resolution, "More satisfactory arrangements for the administration of Scottish affairs are imperatively required; that the increasing population and wealth of Scotland make its proper administration most important to the Empire, while its marked national characteristics and institutions, and separate educational and legal systems, render it impossible satisfactorily to govern Scotland solely through the Home Office and other existing departments of State, already fully occupied by the affairs of England; and that therefore, Government should create a separate and independent department for the conduct of distinctively Scottish affairs, responsible to Parliament and the country for its administration." The National Meeting in Favour of the Creation of a Separate Department of State for Scotland, January 16, 1884 (Edinburgh, 1884 [reprinted 1900]), p. 18.

[116] Robert C. K. Ensor, History of England, 1870 - 1914 (Oxford, 1936), p. 130.

[117] Richmond MSS, MS 871, D 45, Salisbury to Richmond dated August 27, 1885.

Salisbury dismissed the new office as essentially a sop to the Scots but Rosebery was still unsatisfied. The new office lacked sufficient patronage. He wrote to Harcourt that the Secretaryship for Scotland,

> should not be born naked and ashamed. If the legal patronage, which is the whole patronage of Scotland, be fixed elsewhere you will leave the Secretary to do all the work while the fountain of honours will flow from a totally different source. Moreover, it will be universally believed that he is not entrusted with this patronage because he is not big enough to exercise it - he is too insignificant. ... It is impossible to carry on such an office on such a principle. At any rate such an office is not the one that was contemplated either by me or any of its friends. He should be as considerable an official as he can be short of a Secretaryship of State or Cabinet office ... Forgive this ... I feel strongly on the matter.[118]

This demonstrates Rosebery's ongoing interest and involvement in Scottish affairs. His concern was not with outward forms but with the efficient and equitable management of Scottish affairs. Rosebery realised that the new office - which was not necessarily a Cabinet-level post - needed real power and authority or it would become either a sinecure or an irrelevance. Rosebery's concerns proved accurate as the new office soon required augmentation. In 1887 when a bill to amend the office was being debated, he observed that the new office,

> has suffered by the fact that in the 16 months that have followed the passing of the act which created the office there were no less than five incumbents of that office.[119] Five Secretaries for Scotland in less than 16 months would be enough to ruin any office imbued with less vitality than the office which the Noble Marquess [of Lothian] so efficiently fills.[120]

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[118] Harcourt MSS, Dep. 54, f. 83, Rosebery to Harcourt dated April 24, 1885.

[119] i.e. The Duke of Richmond and Gordon (1885), George Otto Trevelyan (1886), Lord Dalhousie (1886), A. J. Balfour (1886 - 87), and Lord Lothian (1887 - 92).

[120] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 318, col. 692, August 1, 1887.

Before leaving this section an important question must be addressed: did Rosebery's concern for Scotland diminish after he secured higher office?[121] In 1886, Rosebery became Foreign Minister which meant that he had proportionately less time to devote to Scottish Affairs but this did not imply that his interest or concern waned. Scotland had its own minister and Rosebery was ploughing new fields, but he would remain Scotland's uncrowned king. Coupland observed that Rosebery's "position as a Scottish nationalist was thus comparable to Lloyd George's subsequent position as a Welsh nationalist. He could and did support the cause on occasion, but he could no longer be its leader."[122] Coupland of course misses the point that Rosebery and Lloyd George were symbols respectively of Scotland and Wales just as Parnell was an icon for Ireland. If Rosebery was the Parnell of Scotland, Lloyd George became the Rosebery of Wales. A symbol was important in and of itself not necessarily for any measurable achievement. Yet, Rosebery did score tangible victories for Scotland: he restored the Secretaryship for Scotland - it was his most enduring legacy.

Scottish Disestablishment

From 1874 to 1895, disestablishment was the most emotive issue in Scottish politics; it was a national issue of primary importance.[123] The Voluntary tradition had a long history in Scotland and since 1847, the United

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[121] James Kellas, among other historians, has maintained this position, "The Liberals Rosebery, Campbell-Bannerman and Haldane as well as Labour leaders Keir Hardie and Ramsay MacDonald gave up their practical interest in purely Scottish matters once they moved south" in "The Liberal Party in Scotland, 1876 - 1895," p. 14.

[122] Coupland, p. 296. Neither man would have enjoyed this comparison.

[123] For a more detailed study of the Scottish Church Question see A. C. Cheyne, The Transforming of the Kirk: Victorian Scotland's Religious Revolution (Edinburgh, 1983) and Andrew L. Drummond and James Bulloch, The Church in Late Victorian Scotland, 1874 - 1900 (Edinburgh, 1976). Also important are Patrick Carnegie Simpson's Life of Principal Rainy (2 vols., London, 1909), Alexander R. MacEwan's Life and Letters of John Cairns (London, 1895), Arthur Gordon's Life of A. H. Charteris (London, 1913) and A. Taylor Innes's, Chapters of Reminiscences (London, 1913).

Presbyterian Church consistently opposed all state establishments and endowments. The issue came into sharper focus when the Free Church of Scotland began to question the establishment. The disestablishment movement coalesced in 1874 when Disraeli abolished patronage in the Church of Scotland. As James Begg, a stalwart Free Churchman and a defender of the establishment principle, noted, "it is much easier to do mischief than to repair [mischief] ... The recent measure good in itself, has exasperated the enemies of the church without effectually conciliating its friends."[124] The leadership of the Free Church were enraged because they were neither consulted nor were their sacrifices from 1843 to 1874 recognized. "The Conservatives thus instigated the major crisis of later nineteenth-century Scottish politics which challenged the survival of the very church they were seeking to make secure."[125]

The church question polarised Scottish politics. The debate was not new. In 1840, Macaulay remarked,

> Can you be surprised if I feel a little inclined to suspect there is, in some of my Dissenting friends, a punctilious disposition - a disposition not perhaps suspected by themselves to make the most of small injuries and to remember them long? ... You are not only dissenters you are also citizens ... The etiquette between Scotch sects is not the only thing that a government has to look to. It is charged with the care of the physical and moral interests of a vast community.[126]

Forewarned, Rosebery moved cautiously. In 1885, he remarked "I thought of speaking about the church, but then I remembered that there would be the

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[124] James Begg, A Letter to the Right Hon. the Earl of Beaconsfield, p. 8.

[125] Hutchison, A Political History of Scotland, p. 117.

[126] J. B. Mackie, The Life and Work of Duncan McLaren (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1888), vol. i, pp. 219 - 20, Macaulay to McLaren dated December 11, 1840. Mackie's transcription is reproduced in Thomas Pinney (ed.), The Letters of Thomas Babington Macaulay (6 vols., Cambridge, 1974 - 81), vol. iii, pp. 355 - 8.

eye of my friend Dr Hutton[127] upon me, and I was not quite sure if I should be up to his mark."[128]

A puzzling question is how the Free Church, which owed its existence to a strict adherence to the establishment principle,[129] became a leading advocate of disestablishment.[130] One obvious answer is that the Free Church realised that on its own it could not displace the Church of Scotland as the Established Church of Scotland and therefore disestablishment and reunion were palatable alternatives. However, such a course required a degree of theological revision. In 1843, Chalmers maintained that he left a vitiated establishment, and he would rejoice to return to a reformed one. He did not question the establishment principle nor did he seek union with the Voluntaries. Under the leadership of Principal Robert Rainy,[131] however, the Free Church attempted maintain a very fine distinction. Rainy maintained, "The existing connection between Church and state, being upheld on an

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[127] George Clark Hutton (1825 - 1908) was a minister in the United Presbyterian (UP) and later the United Free (UF) Churches. An Evangelical and an ardent Voluntary, he was the moderator of the UP Synod in 1884 and the UF General Assembly in 1906. In 1892, he succeeded John Cairns as the Principal of the UP Theological Hall. From 1872 - 90, he was the convener of the UP Disestablishment Committee.

[128] Rosebery, "Speech at Paisley," October 15, 1885, in The Times, October 16, p. 10.

[129] Chapter XXIII, "Of the Civil Magistrate" in the Westminster Confession of Faith stated "God, the Supreme Lord and King of all the world, hath ordained civil magistrates to be under him over the people, for his own glory, and the publick good."

[130] In the Ten Years' Conflict which led up to the Disruption, Evangelicals and Moderates in the Church of Scotland clashed over the relationship between church and state. Evangelicals held that the power of the temporal government was secondary to that of the church, while their opponents embraced erastianism, which placed the church under the control of the state. A valuable summary of these events is given in Stewart J. Brown's, "The Ten Years' Conflict and the Disruption of 1843," in Stewart J. Brown and Michael Fry (eds.), Scotland in the Age of the Disruption (Edinburgh, 1993).

[131] Dr. Robert Rainy (1826 - 1906) was Minister of the Free Church, Huntly, Aberdeenshire (1851 - 54) and the Free High Church, Edinburgh (1854 - 62). He was Professor of Church History at New College, Edinburgh (1862 - 1900) and Principal of New College (1874 - 1901). He was the most influential and tireless supporter of Scottish Disestablishment and later of the union between the Free and United Presbyterian Churches. He was Moderator of the Free Church Assembly in 1887 and the first Moderator of the United Free Church Assembly in 1900 and again in 1905. Among other works, he was the author of The Life of William Cunningham, D.D. (1871) and The Bible and Criticism (1878).

unscriptural and inequitable basis, ought to be brought to an end in the interests alike of national religion and of Scottish Presbyterianism."[132] Rainy stated that the "Free Church principle was that Establishment grounded on erastianism was indefensible."[133] By 1877, the Free Church officially accepted disestablishment.[134]

The Liberal Party, which already had disestablished the Church of Ireland, grew more sympathetic to Welsh and Scottish Disestablishment, but it firmly upheld the established church in England. It was a precarious balance.[135] Gladstone remained sympathetic but vague because disestablishment threatened to reduce Liberal strength in Scotland and imperil the party in England. In June 1878, he publicly conceded, "the established Church of Scotland must stand or fall according to the general convictions of the people of Scotland,"[136] while in his diary he confided that the "Scottish Established Church ... has not I think another decade of years to live."[137] In 1880, Gladstone again put off disestablishment,

> There is no analogy whatever between the case of the Church of Scotland and the Church of Ireland ... the established Church of Scotland grew out of the soil and instead of being forced upon the people, was forced by the people.[138]

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[132] Rainy in 1874 quoted in Simpson, The Life of Principal Rainy, vol. i, p. 277.

[133] Ibid, vol. ii, p. 24.

[134] Ibid, vol. ii, p. 1.

[135] In 1885, Gladstone identified this difficulty, "We are in danger, I think of getting into a false position. South of the Border the Tories try to make it a test question and we protest. If we do this and rightly, how can we countenance making [disestablishment] a test question North of the Border?" in The Gladstone Diaries, vol. xi, p. 423, Gladstone to Chamberlain dated November 6, 1885.

[136] G. W. T. Omond, The Lord Advocates of Scotland, Second Series, 1834 - 1880 (London, 1914), p. 327.

[137] The Gladstone Diaries, vol. ix, p. 323, entry dated June 18, 1878.

[138] W. E. Gladstone, Political Speeches in Scotland March and April 1880 (Edinburgh, 1880), p. 192.

From Home Rule to disestablishment, Gladstone consistently opposed linking Irish and Scottish movements.

Like his mentor, Rosebery based his response to disestablishment on a pragmatic analysis of the political climate rather than on the principle involved. "To put it broadly," he asserted, "establishments were made for the people and not the people for establishments."[139] Rosebery consistently maintained the right of the state to have an established religion with two provisos. Firstly, the people must be satisfied with the establishment and secondly the established church must be firmly under the control of the state. He therefore disagreed with the Free Church, who maintained an outward allegiance to the establishment principle, and he opposed the Voluntaries who opposed any form of established religion. Rosebery tried to maintain a middle ground which satisfied neither party.

In his 1882 Edinburgh Rectorial Address, Rosebery briefly addressed the church question. He sought inclusion rather than exclusion, "when I speak of the Church I mean, of course the Presbyterian churches, whether established or not."[140] Such a statement is of little value, because in an effort to find common ground the real and serious divides between the three churches are ignored or minimised. He later urged,

> I, for my part, wish with all my heart that with no difference of doctrine that any eye can perceive, [the three Presbyterian churches] could have found the opportunity to amalgamate once more into the national church of Scotland.[141]

This statement demonstrates, either a fundamental misunderstanding of the

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[139] Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," February 19, 1889, in The Scotsman, February 20, p. 6. This is an allusion to Mark, chapter 2, verse 27.

[140] Rosebery, "Edinburgh Rectorial Address," in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 125.

[141] Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," March 17, 1894, in The Times, March 19, p. 8.

theological issues involved or an inexcusable naivete. Members of the three churches knew exactly what issues divided them and to them these issues were far from minor.

By 1885, Scottish Disestablishment became more difficult to avoid, particularly after Chamberlain's speaking tour in Scotland.[142] Yet, Gladstone and Rosebery remained wary. In September 1885, in a letter to The Times, Rosebery warned against making disestablishment a test question,

> I do not believe that the country is ripe for it, while I suspect the main result of raising it will be to further Conservative prospects in the coming elections. If the people of Scotland wish for disestablishment, nothing can prevent its becoming a test question; if the people of Scotland do not wish for it, nothing can make it one.[143]

Rosebery employed classic Gladstonian reasoning and language to buy time and forestall division, but ardent disestablishers were not so easily placated. On November 6, 1885, Rosebery advised Gladstone to proceed cautiously,

> What is wanted, in fine is this: to make every church Liberal understand that in voting for the Liberal candidate he is in no way voting or expressing an opinion on the disestablishment of the Church of Scotland.[144]

A few days later, Gladstone was prepared to support

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[142] Speaking cautiously on the church question in Glasgow, Chamberlain received such a warm response, "that at Inverness where he next went, he gave himself full tether, brought the whole meeting to its feet and to the waving of hats and handkerchiefs, and resolved then and there to make disestablishment the testing question of the General Election as if he were already the Liberal chief." RP, MS 10099, f. 7, James Davidson of Glasgow to Rosebery dated November 1, 1894.

[143] The Times, September 11, 1885, p. 8.

[144] GP, Add MS 44288, f. 265, Rosebery to Gladstone dated November 6, 1885.

disestablishment publicly, until he received a deputation from Professor Charteris[145] and John Tulloch[146] of the Church of Scotland, which showed a majority of his Midlothian constituents favoured preserving the establishment of the Church of Scotland.[147] Hastily, Gladstone retreated. He made the following entry in his diary for November 11, 1885 - the day he had planned to advocate disestablishment, "Conversation with Rosebery on the Disestablishment scare ... Spoke 70 min. in Free Kirk Hall: a difficult subject. The present agitation does not strengthen in my mind the principle of Establishment."[148] Nonetheless, some damage was done. At the 1885 General Election, 27 of 72 Scottish seats were contested by two Liberals - 13 of these contests were caused by the church question. One seat was lost.[149]

The disestablishment lobby grew more clamorous. Gladstone and Rosebery were continually badgered. In 1889, Rosebery observed (in the style of Macaulay),

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[145] Archibald Hamilton Charteris (1835 - 1909) was a leading figure in the Church of Scotland during the post-Disruption era. He was Professor of Biblical Criticism and Biblical Antiquities at the University of Edinburgh (1868 - 98), Moderator of the General Assembly (1892) and a Chaplain to Queen Victoria and King Edward VII.

[146] John Tulloch (1823 - 1886) was a leading spokesman for the Church of Scotland and was the Moderator of the 1878 General Assembly. He was a chaplain to Queen Victoria and in 1882 was appointed Dean of the Chapel Royal.

[147] "When the electoral roll was issued on November 2, 1885, Tulloch and Charteris obtained signatures from all parishes in Midlothian to the statement 'I am opposed to the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of Scotland.' They presented the petition to Gladstone on November 9 signed by 64% of the electors. Charteris noted, 'Mr Gladstone's face instantly flushed: he took the papers out of my hands with great avidity, and exclaimed, 'This is a most interesting paper, a most valuable paper' and in a few seconds added, 'you will find when I speak to-morrow that a great many fears and a great many hopes will alike be disappointed,'" in Gordon, The Life of Archibald Hamilton Charteris, p. 400. Charteris and Tulloch no doubt failed to inform Gladstone that among those opposed to disestablishment were many Tories who would not vote for Gladstone anyway!

[148] The Gladstone Diaries, vol. xi, p. 427, entry for November 11, 1885. Also see Simpson's, Life of Rainy, vol. ii, p. 39 for a description of this gathering.

[149] James G. Kellas, "The Liberal Party and the Scottish Church Disestablishment Crisis," English Historical Review, vol. lxxix (1964), p. 36. Viscount Dalrymple contested the Kilmarnock District of Burghs effectively splitting the Liberal vote. He enabled the Conservative candidate, Peter Sturrock, to win the seat with only 40.2% of the popular vote. F. W. S. Craig (ed.), British Parliamentary Results, 1885-1918 (London, 1974), p. 513.

> Hutton is a man whom it is difficult to satisfy. He and Argyll though from different points of view, think that the universe and its population are mainly concerned with the Scottish Church establishment, whereas the general interest in that question is languid. I hope however that what I say, though it can hardly deserve his blessings, may receive his absolution. What really is stirring people in Scotland is not disestablishment but Scottish Home Rule and that is a much more complex and delicate question than the other.[150]

Rosebery's statement about disestablishment was premature; it did not lapse until after 1895. His second remark comparing Scottish Home Rule to disestablishment is intriguing. Scottish Home Rule and disestablishment were both complex questions. Presumably, Rosebery sees Scottish Home Rule to be linked with his larger vision for Imperial Federation. The readjustment of relations between Westminster and Scotland would necessitate a constitutional reorganisation with vast implications for the Colonies and Dominions. As Gladstone proved in 1869 with the Church of Ireland, disestablishment could be applied to one portion of the United Kingdom exclusively. In 1890, Rosebery admitted to Gladstone that popular opinion for disestablishment was very difficult to assess,

> Of course, the crux lies in discovering the real wishes of the Scottish people; and I know not how that can be done except through their parliamentary representatives. At the same time I doubt greatly if a plebiscite in Scotland would give a majority for disestablishment.[151]

At the 1892 General Election, the Newcastle Programme officially linked the Liberal Party to an array of controversial and divisive issues including Scottish Disestablishment. The results of the General Election were dismal: the Liberal Party had just enough support to form a government, but not enough to compel the House of Lords to pass its legislation. Rosebery

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[150] GP, Add MS 44289, f. 106, Rosebery to Gladstone dated November 11, 1889.

[151] GP, Add MS 44289, f. 127, Rosebery to Gladstone dated October 16, 1890.

noted, that Gladstone

> Felt the wreck of his high hopes severely. Yesterday, he revived a good deal and he has borne his cruel disappointment heroically. I say 'cruel disappointment' because he would not hear of anything below 80 or 100 majority and insisted on forming governments & c. - much to my discomposure. ... The church question, as I had always feared, will do us no good. There is no enthusiasm on behalf of disestablishment and a good deal against it.[152]

As a pragmatic politician, Rosebery realised the divisive effects of disestablishment as well as the few blessings which it offered the party. The narrowness of Gladstone's victory in Midlothian was due both to Gladstone's official acceptance of disestablishment and to Rosebery's conspicuous absence.[153] Following Hannah's death, Rosebery was far more reclusive. He notified Gladstone that he was "leaving the organization of Midlothian entirely to your agents and yourself."[154]

As Foreign Secretary in Gladstone's fourth administration, Rosebery could distance himself from the implications of the Newcastle Programme but this became impossible when he became Prime Minister in 1894. Inheriting Gladstone's Cabinet and campaign manifesto, Rosebery supported Scottish Disestablishment for political rather than ideological reasons. At Edinburgh in March 1894, he maintained, "every manse or nearly every manse, of the established Church of Scotland is an agency for the Tory Party."[155] Not surprisingly, disestablishers expected results from Rosebery. Principal Rainy insisted,

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[152] Hamilton MSS, Add MS 48612A, f. 184, Rosebery to Hamilton dated July 8, 1892.

[153] After running unopposed in 1886, Gladstone barely secured victory in 1892. He beat Col. Wauchope by a margin of 690 (out of 13,234 electors, Gladstone secured 5,845 votes to Wauchope's 5,155). Craig (ed.), British Parliamentary Results, 1885 - 1918, p. 537.

[154] GP, Add MS 44289, f. 156, Rosebery to Gladstone dated June 5, 1892.

[155] Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," March 17, 1894, in The Times, March 19, p. 8.

> The friends of Scottish Disest. feel that their question has been losing rank: (a) it has been postponed to Welsh Disestablishment with which it was once abreast; (b) if there is doubt (which I should much lament) whether it is again to be mentioned in the Queen's speech that is a distinct additional discouragement: (c) the question is left in the hands of a private member: (d) and when the question is put whether Government will take his measure into their own hands, the answer is enigmatic and disconcerting. These things create an impression that the good intentions of the Government are dubious & remote. This impression in turn leads to a suspicious construction of things in themselves unimportant.[156]

In 1889, Gladstone had noted, "Wales & Scotland are running a race one against the other & both are pressing me."[157] By 1894, the Welsh were winning and the Scots were a bitter second. Disestablishers gave Rosebery no rest.[158] Their entreaties soon became threats,

> If the Government will not listen to the frequent appeals from Liberals in Scotland, and yield to them, some of us will have to make appeals to the people of Scotland and to Liberal associations in Scotland where our treatment by the Government will be openly debated with results that will be deplorable.[159]

Early in May 1895, after a meeting with United Presbyterian leaders, Rosebery

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[156] RP, MS 10148, f. 125, Rainy to Rosebery dated November 13, 1894. As early as 1887, this concern had been raised at a meeting of the SLA, "We beg to state (1.) that whilst admitting that legislation on religious equality in Scotland cannot claim precedence over the absorbing question of the government of Ireland, they urge emphatically that it should have a prominent place in the Liberal programme as a question now ripe for settlement, the postponement of which is seriously prejudicing the most cherished aspirations of the Scottish people. (2.) They urge further that the question in Scotland is quite as ripe for settlement as in Wales, and that the Welsh claim ought not to have precedence over that of Scotland." SLA Executive Council minutes, vol. 14, p. 21, meeting dated November 16, 1887.

[157] RP, MS 10023, f. 272, Gladstone to Rosebery dated November 8, 1889.

[158] Disestablishment was one example of faddism or single-issue politics. As D. A. Hamer noted, compromise or conciliation was not in the vocabulary of a 'faddist' who was "an enthusiast for the cause and that his enthusiasm was so strong that he tended to feel very impatient with others who did not share it." D. A. Hamer, The Politics of Electoral Pressure: A study in the History of Victorian Reform Agitations (Sussex, 1978), p. 1.

[159] RP, MS 10148, f. 148, David Mitchell to Rosebery dated January 9, 1895.

vented his growing frustration to Rainy,

> The day before yesterday, I received Principal Hutton and Messrs Martin and Mitchell[160] with reference to the question of Scottish Disestablishment. They were unfortunately by no means unanimous in their representations. For whereas Mr Mitchell was ready to adopt the bill of Sir Charles Cameron,[161] Principal Hutton urged that it was not disestablishment at all. However, the point on which I am writing is not this.
>
> Mr Mitchell urged that a (~~another~~) further statement should be given of the intentions of the Government. He said that those he represented were entirely satisfied with what I had said at Cardiff, but that they were dissatisfied with what Sir George Trevelyan had since said in the House of Commons. I myself do not perceive any difference between the two statements, and I object to the Government being perpetually asked questions on this subject, as if those who asked them mistrusted the statements which have already been made, and those who made them. Moreover if you have to choose between a declaration made by the Prime Minister and one made by the Secretary for Scotland, it is quite obvious that it is the first that is to be considered the authoritative.
>
> I therefore deprecated any further questions, but the interview seemed, I am sorry to say, to leave Mr Mitchell dissatisfied (~~between ourselves, in a sore not to say sour temper~~)[162] He said that the result of the conference was not merely that he should not be able to convince others, but that he himself now required conviction. To my mind, this is a mystery. But I do not profess to understand all things, and it may be that what is obscure to me is obvious to others.[163]

Rosebery had lost his patience, not simply with Scottish Disestablishment but with the many heads of the Newcastle Programme. His Government was divided and besieged. It was ironic - but not unprecedented - that the Scots,

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[160] Benjamin Martin (d. 1917) was minister of UP Church at Leslie (1864 - 1917) and David Mitchell (1847 - 1896) was the Minister of the Kirkurd Free Church, Peeblesshire, from 1877.

[161] Sir Charles Cameron (1841 - 1924) edited the North British Daily Mail (1864 - 74). He was an advanced Liberal MP for Glasgow (1874 - 95), the College division of Glasgow (1885 - 95) and the Bridgeton division of Glasgow (1897 - 1900). He supported Home Rule All Round, disestablishment, land law reform, and local option.

[162] Excised in Rosebery's draft copy.

[163] RP, MS 10148, f. 169, Rosebery to Rainy [copy with corrections] dated May 4, 1895.

who seemed most predisposed to support Rosebery's premiership were its most ardent critics. Rosebery realised the true futility of the situation because if a measure for Scottish Disestablishment ever passed, it would be torpedoed by the House of Lords. As his ministry limped to its conclusion, a minor defeat in the Commons released Rosebery from the shackles of office. After 1895, disestablishers looked ahead to reunion while Rosebery longed for a future free from the constraints of the Newcastle Programme.[164]

Scottish Home Rule

Gladstone's support of Irish Home Rule in 1886 naturally had collateral effects on Scotland and Wales. On April 24, 1886, the Scottish Home Rule Association (SHRA) was founded.[165] Gavin Brown Clark(**) was president and the association's most active members were John Stuart Blackie, Chairman, John Romans(**), Vice Chairman, William Mitchell(**), General Treasurer, and Charles Waddie(**), Secretary. Unlike the Irish Nationalist Party, the SHRA battled indifference rather than hostility.[166] The SHRA had four goals and ten indictments against the *status quo*:

A. To maintain the integrity of the Empire.
B. To promote the establishment of a legislature sitting in Scotland.
C. To secure control of civil servants with the exception of the military and diplomatic.

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[164] Rosebery strongly supported the Union of the United Presbyterian and Free Churches in 1900. On October 31, 1900 - the day of the union - "Shortly after the proceedings opened, Lord Rosebery, who can always appreciate the historically significant in public events, came in." Simpson, The Life of Principal Rainy, vol. ii, p. 248.

[165] The SHRA was inaugurated by Charles Waddie's letter dated January 8, 1886 which appeared in The Scotsman, January 9, p. 8. Waddie sketched a scheme of Home Rule for the three kingdoms (Wales was often overlooked by the SHRA) which would strengthen the Empire.

[166] The Marquess of Bute, a vice-president of the SHRA and one of the few Conservative Scottish nationalists, noted, "The ignorance which prevails in England with regard to Scotland is sometimes amusing and occasionally irritating. It is often astonishing." John Patrick Crichton-Stuart, 3rd Marquess of Bute, Parliament in Scotland (SHRA, 1889), p. 1.

D. To foster the national sentiment of Scotland and to maintain her national right and honour.

1. The Union was obtained by bribery.
2. Parliament is overburdened with work.
3. Scotchmen know Scotch business best.
4. Scottish business is neglected.
5. Scottish business is settled contrary to the wishes of Scotland.
6. Ruinous cost of private bill legislation.
7. Unity of the Empire and liberty of the subject.
8. Home Rule is a relief to the British parliament.
9. Scotland overtaxed and starved.
10. Preservation of Scottish Nationality.[167]

The SHRA identified grievances and sparked debate, but as a nationalist organisation it was of marginal importance. The SHRA lacked a prominent national leader. Most of its supporters in the Commons were back-bench cyphers. This does not imply that the larger movement for increased Home Rule for Scotland was unimportant. The restoration of a Scottish Parliament was but one demand in the larger movement for increased local autonomy. An Edinburgh Parliament was not restored, but Scotland did secure wider local and county government and improved conditions for Scottish legislation at Westminster.

The SHRA's propaganda was extensive (albeit repetitive and rarely eloquent) and it highlighted an important fact. In the late 19th century, Scots continually stressed their loyalty to crown and country. The Union of 1707 was the standard on which nationalists (including Rosebery) based their creed.[168] In 1892, Blackie noted, "in the case of Scotland, there is no bitter

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[167] Platform of the Scottish Home Rule Association, (SHRA, n.d.). The same broadsheet lamented for every hour that Scottish business received in the Commons the Irish received twelve.

[168] When the SHRA was reconstituted in the 1920s, it was strongly anti-union. Cunninghame-Graham noted "We hope that before long the 'Auld sang' would resound once more through the Scottish legislature as in the days when Fletcher of Saltoun and the Scottish patriots protested against the infamy that took away our national legislature," Self Government for Scotland (SHRA, 1920), p. 8.

animosity to conciliate; we only advance a claim for fair play, which the very nature of an honourable union implies."[169] Paradoxically, the Scots' "careful loyalty had the distressing result that they were seldom taken seriously by either governments at Westminster or nationalists in Ireland."[170]

The SHRA linked its destiny to the Liberal Party,[171] but this marriage was not ideal. The Liberals lacked power and the Scottish Home Rulers lacked patience. In the first twenty years of the SHRA's existence (1886 - 1905) the Liberals were in power for only three years. As Fry noted, at this time, "Frustration was the key motif of Scottish politics."[172] Undaunted, the SHRA lobbied, bullied, and annoyed Liberal leaders inside and outside of Westminster,[173] only to discover that the Liberal Party's interest in Scottish Home Rule was shallow. A private measure for Scottish Home Rule was put forward every year from 1889 to 1895, and in 1894 and 1895 the first reading was carried.[174] Yet, the SHRA failed to convert either Gladstone or Rosebery.

Gladstone's references to Scottish affairs including Scottish Home Rule were infrequent but important.[175] Fry's contention that Gladstone "remained

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[169] John Stuart Blackie, The Union of 1707 and Its results: A Plea for Scottish Home Rule, (Glasgow, 1892), p. 13.

[170] Naylor, Scottish Attitudes to Ireland, 1880 - 1914, p. 19.

[171] Little could be hoped for from the Conservatives. Arthur James Balfour declared in 1898, "we object to Home Rule whether it begins with Ireland and ends with Wales or begins with Wales and ends with Ireland," quoted in Naylor, Scottish Attitudes to Ireland, p. 65.

[172] Michael Fry, Patronage and Principle (Aberdeen, 1987), p. 88.

[173] On November 5, 1890, Gladstone wrote to Rosebery, "I turn my face southwards with every satisfaction as to the matters which had caused some apprehension in Scotland, namely disestablishment and Scottish Home Rule. As regards the latter, one has to respect an indeterminate but widespread feeling, and in no way to judge of it by the mischievous and rather impudent action of the H.R. association." RP, MS 10024, f. 33.

[174] See The Parliamentary History of Scottish Home Rule (SHRA, [1924]).

[175] As early as 1871, Gladstone pledged, "For Englishmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen, and Welshmen, for us all, it is most important that we should endeavour, if we can devise some improved arrangements ... to give greater facility and expedition in the despatch of those large portions of its business which are either local or social and non-political." Gladstone, "Speech at Aberdeen," September 26, 1871, in The Times, September 27, p. 6.

in fact a metropolitan politician ignorant of and unsympathetic towards many of Scotland's problems,"[176] is both unfair and unsubstantiated. Gladstone viewed the United Kingdom as composed of four nations, but he deprecated efforts to treat these nations identically.[177] He did not dismiss Scottish Home Rule, but placed it in a reasonable context alongside of Ireland, "The question of Home Rule in Scotland ... is a question of making an improvement in a country already happy and well governed. Is that the case with Ireland?"[178] As with other secondary issues, Gladstone urged patience until the Irish Question was solved.[179]

Like Gladstone, Rosebery said little about Scottish Home Rule except in the context of Irish Home Rule. In 1888, he promised his support if and when Scottish Home Rule became ripe,

> When there is a national demand for Scottish Home Rule you will find me no laggard in serving you, but let me however single out two points in connection with it. Do not mix it up with the Irish demand in point of kind or in point of time. You cannot identify the Scottish demand with the Irish in its nature or in its character. The two cases are totally distinct. I will not now say which is the stronger, but I well know which is the more mature. In the next place, I would say this as regards the point of time, you must take care not to attempt to move your demand, when it is made, parallel with that for Ireland. I will tell you why. The British nation can only take one great question at a time. You may consider that a deplorable - a lamentable feature of

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[176] Fry, Patronage and Principle, p. 93.

[177] In 1886, Chamberlain announced a scheme of local self-government applicable simultaneously to each portion of the United Kingdom. Gladstone expressed his unequivocal opposition, "this principle of cast iron uniformity for England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales that they are all to have institutions cast in the same mould and corresponding in every particular - it is a bad, a false, a vulgar principle." Gladstone, "Address at Glasgow," June 22, 1886, in The Times, June 23, p. 8.

[178] Gladstone "Address at Glasgow," June 22, 1886, in The Times, June 23, p. 8.

[179] Using a favourite metaphor, Gladstone asserted "The question is not ripe. It has not been discussed. It is new to Scotland - to a great part of Scotland. It has received no thorough examination and the wisdom of statesmen and of Parliaments is to refuse to discuss any question until it is ripe, and when it is ripe then to refuse to delay the discussion." Gladstone, "Address at Glasgow," June 22, 1886, in The Times, June 23, p. 8.

> our national character. I believe it is to that, that we owe the thoroughness, the genuineness, and the completeness of our measures of reform. ... Remember this, that your salvation, if you wish it, will be worked out in Ireland, and that the consideration of the case of Ireland gives you time, gives you leisure, and opportunity to mature your own case and your own wants.[180]

At this point, Rosebery strictly adhered to Gladstone's Home Rule policy and principle. Ireland had first priority. All other domestic concerns, though important, were secondary. The Irish Question certainly raised similar questions throughout Britain, but Rosebery maintained that the Irish solution was not necessarily the Scottish or the Welsh solution. This position was politically wise but irritated the SHRA who maintained that Ireland and Scotland merited identical and immediate treatment. Rosebery accepted Scotland's concerns, but he could not give them primacy over Irish or foreign affairs.

Rosebery, in his position as Scotland's unofficial spokesman, was expected to address Scottish concerns, and his declarations were given special weight. In 1889, he wrote to Gladstone,

> I have soon to speak in Scotland. On two subjects I must make a declaration,
> 1. Disestablishment. On that I cannot but say that the time has come: so far as we can judge from the authorised exponent of Scottish opinion.
> 2. Scottish Home Rule On that I propose to say that what Scotland really wants, Scotland will have. But that at present we have no demand put forward in terms sufficiently precise for legislation: and that it cannot well be dealt with concurrently with the Irish case.
> I hope this will not displease you.[181]

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[180] Rosebery, "Address to Dalkeith Liberal Association," November 1, 1888, in The Scotsman, November 2, p. 6.

[181] GP, Add MS 44289, f. 105, Rosebery to Gladstone dated November 8, 1889. On November 25, 1889, Gladstone received confirmation of Rosebery's views from Holmes Ivory (Gladstone's Midlothian agent), "1. With regard to Scottish Disestablishment, I believe the

A few days later Rosebery was more candid when he expressed his fears to Elgin, "It is difficult to go far in the direction of Scottish Home Rule without doing an infinity of harm in England."[182] Mitchell of the SHRA also recognised this danger which threatened to delay or prevent action by the Liberals. "The Liberal Party, if they can will deny her [Scotland] Home Rule so as to retain the Scotch Liberal vote to buttress their power in England."[183] Scottish Home Rule - like Scottish Disestablishment - imperilled Liberal unity within Britain, yet failed to secure any tangible benefits for the party in Scotland.

On November 22, 1889, Rosebery presided over a meeting of the Scottish Liberal Association in the afternoon at which a Home Rule resolution was moved in the following terms,

> This national conference is of opinion that Home Rule should be granted to Scotland so that the Scotch people could have the sole control and management of their own national affairs, and suggests that the true solution of the question may be found on a federal basis by granting Home Rule legislatures to Scotland, England, Ireland and Wales; and in respect of the urgency of the claim of Ireland, declares that that country must have first consideration.[184]

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question is now ripe to be pushed forward so far as Scottish Liberal opinion is concerned. I leave you to gather English Liberal opinion on this subject from other sources - but I know no true Liberals in Scotland who are not favourable to Scottish Disestablishment. There may be some, but I am confident they do not amount to one in every thousand. On the other hand the Dissentient Liberals are divided in opinion on this subject so if we push it forward we have a good chance of dividing the enemy. 2. Scottish Home Rule or Local Rule. Opinion is much less ripe on this question ... but opinion while unformed is moving in the direction of Scottish Local Rule." GP, Add MS 44505, f. 160, Holmes Ivory to Gladstone dated November 25, 1889.

[182] Rosebery to Elgin dated November 18, 1889 in Hutchison, A Political History of Scotland, p. 173. I rely on Hutchison's citation because the Elgin papers are currently inaccessible. No corresponding response from Elgin to Rosebery is preserved in the Rosebery Papers at the National Library of Scotland.

[183] Mitchell, Is Scotland to Be Sold Again? (SHRA, [1893]), p. 101.

[184] SLA MSS, vol. 2, p. 129, meeting on November 22, 1889. This motion was moved by Bailie Walcot of Edinburgh and seconded by Dr Cameron. In his opening remarks, Rosebery mentioned neither Scottish Home Rule nor Disestablishment; rather he vainly urged the

Given Rosebery's support for Imperial Federation, it is not surprising that he lends his support to the Federation of the United Kingdom - more commonly known as Home Rule All Round. This is compatible with Gladstonian Home Rule because Ireland's primacy is clearly guaranteed. In fairness, this resolution was more a reflection of the progressivism of the SLA than a sign of Rosebery's influence. Scottish Liberals no longer waited for guidance, they took the initiative.

In the evening of November 22, Rosebery delivered the speech which he had alluded to earlier. His remarks on disestablishment were unremarkable,[185] but his comments on Home Rule were revealing,

> I deal with questions in the spirit of one who has dealt with them both in Parliament and in the Government. I have to look to what I wish for, but I also have to consider what I can obtain, and it is in this spirit that I approach Scottish Home Rule. I believe the principle of Home Rule to be universally just and sound. But I say in this matter it is a question of degree. In some places you will find Home Rule considered a question of county government; in some places, you will find it a question of private bill legislation; in some you will find it a question of a legislative body not of too great a capacity; and in some you will find it a reconstitution of the Scottish Parliament. I say it is mainly a matter of national option for in the long run whatever Scotland wants, Scotland will get.[186]

Rosebery neatly encapsulated popular emotions into simple but memorable idioms. Parnell urged his countrymen to "hold a firm grip on your

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delegates to consider the problem of an intransigent and hostile House of Lords.

[185] Rosebery maintained, "I do not consider that an established church is either a necessity or an outrage. The church is a necessity but the establishment is a superfluity. It is a superfluity in which in my opinion, the state - the nation has a right to indulge if it chooses; but it is a superfluity without which it can very well do if it pleases." Rosebery, "Speech at the Glasgow University Liberal Club," November 22, 1889, in The Times, November 23, p. 10.

[186] Rosebery, "Speech at the Glasgow University Liberal Club," November 22, 1889, in The Times, November 23, p. 10.

homesteads and lands,"[187] Lord Randolph Churchill intimated, "Ulster will fight; Ulster will be right," and Rosebery insisted that "Whatever Scotland wants, Scotland will get." This ability to turn a neat phrase was as rare as it was useful. Throughout Rosebery's career, certain phrases - for good or ill - were associated with him. "The Predominant Partner," "The Commonwealth of Nations" and "National Efficiency" were wonderfully vague and mutable phrases which Rosebery coined into popular currency.

Also in this speech, Rosebery adopted a broad definition of Scottish Home Rule. He did not reject the specific claim for an Edinburgh Parliament but he suggested that lesser measures might satisfy Scotland's demands. Not surprisingly, these remarks drew a public rebuke from William Mitchell, who saw Rosebery's suggestions as weak and insincere,

> Lord Rosebery has shown no such modesty in advocating his pet scheme of Imperial Federation.[188] Let him take care in tendering advice to the Scottish people on the one hand and to the Colonists on the other, he does not fall between the stools. Scotsmen are not likely to be contented with a glorified County Council even if Lord Rosebery should become its chairman and our Colonists are not likely to embrace his scheme of Imperial Federation unless they obtain representation in the Imperial Parliament.[189]

Yet Rosebery recognised that Home Rule has many forms including improved local and county government. As The Student noted, "By his influence, and yet more by his example [i.e. his presidency of the London

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[187] Barry O'Brien, Life of Parnell, vol. i, p. 184 from the Westport meeting on June 7, 1879.

[188] To be fair, Rosebery never put forward a definite or immediate plan for Imperial Federation, but rather sought to keep the idea before the public while the details could be worked out later.

[189] The open letter appeared first in The Scottish Review, October 1890, pp. 349 - 50. The correspondence between Mitchell and Rosebery was published by Mitchell as a pamphlet, Lord Rosebery and Home Rule for Scotland: A Challenge (SHRA, 1893), with the following prefatory remark, [p. 6] "The national cause of Scotland is not yet indebted for anything to Lord Rosebery."

County Council], our parish and county councils to-day have the services of able men."[190] In 1889, Salisbury's Government established Scottish County Councils and in 1894, Rosebery's Government established Parish Councils throughout Scotland. These councils largely replaced the system of Commissioners of Supply and non-elected boards by which Scotland was governed since the 17th century. Scotland lacked a parliament in Edinburgh, but by 1894, it had wider local government than ever before. These advances satisfied Rosebery but not the SHRA.

Another form of effective devolution was secured through the Scottish Grand Committee. In his first address as Premier, Rosebery noted,

> I have not yet exhausted what I have to say about Scotch business, for what I have now to say is perhaps the most important item of all, which is this, that all Scotch bills in the opinion of the Government, should be referred with the least possible delay to a Scottish Grand Committee ... [which is] the best plan and the most efficient by which Scotch measures can be got through Parliament with the practised assistance of Scotsmen.[191]

Again, the Scottish Grand Committee - by the standards of the day - was home rule in essence if not in name. It was one of the few tangible and enduring legacies of Rosebery's brief premiership. Yet, this advance was vehemently opposed by the SHRA as "unauthorized by the Scottish people, and inconsistent with the demand for a legislature and executive in Scotland."[192] Despite the carping of the SHRA, Rosebery secured two tangible victories in expanding local or self-rule in Scotland.

Scottish Home Rulers were not so easily pleased. They closely

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[190] The Student [University of Edinburgh], November 3, 1898, p. 46.

[191] Rosebery "Speech at Edinburgh," March 17, 1894, in The Times, March 19, p. 8.

[192] Mitchell, Is Scotland to Be Sold Again? (SHRA, [1893]), p. 101.

monitored Rosebery's words. Following an address in Devonport on December 11, 1894, Charles Waddie, the Honorary Secretary of the SHRA, wrote to Rosebery,

> I have read in the Scotsman the report of your speech delivered last night at Devonport. The following sentences is [sic] what specially interests me. "At present the English which comprises two thirds of the representation in the House of Commons and comprises so large so great so vast a majority of the population and the wealth of the United Kingdom has to wait its turn until other nationalities are served. And so it will always be until by a wise and politic act of devolution, you are able to allocate to the several portions of the United Kingdom, those portions of legislation which directly interest themselves."[193] The only meaning I can put upon these words is Home Rule All Round and I was glad to note that they were cheered by the great English audience. I had always contended that England had a greater interest in this Home Rule Question than any other country of the Union. If the Government will clearly accept of this great Federal principle then it will not only be my duty but also the duty of every member of the Scottish Home Rule Association to give the Government their most hearty support.[194]

Rosebery disagreed with Waddie's construction. His views of Home Rule as defined above were broader. Consequently, Rosebery never satisfied the SHRA or the more extreme and idiosyncratic Scottish nationalists, such as Theodore Napier(**).[195] He refused to be their mouthpiece. Rosebery rarely walked beneath another's banner.

Waddie's mention of Home Rule All Round deserves some comment. As early as May 1888,[196] the SHRA, realising that Scottish Home Rule would

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[193] This extract is an accurate transcription. See The Times, December 12, 1894, p. 11.

[194] RP, MS 10100, f. 69, Waddie to Rosebery dated December 12, 1894.

[195] See Napier's diatribe in which he accused Rosebery of treating "the home rule for Scotland movement with unmerited derision," RP, MS 10113, f. 26, Napier to Rosebery dated January 25, 1900.

[196] On May 9, 1888, a resolution was laid before the SLA calling for Home Rule for Ireland, Scotland, England, and Wales. SLA MSS, vol. 2, p. 124.

never displace Irish Home Rule, attempted to convert the Liberal Party to 'Home Rule All Round' - a scheme whereby each of the four nations in the United Kingdom would have its own local Parliament to deal with purely local issues and Westminster would legislate for the Empire. In this light, can Harvie's view that "Scottish home rule bobbed about in the slipstream of the Irish: it did not have their motive power"[197] be accepted? Federation of the United Kingdom or the Empire never captured the imagination of the Irish people or their leaders,[198] and there never was an English Home Rule movement, but nonetheless the Scots tried to promote a more advanced and wideranging position than their Irish brethren. Given Rosebery's adherence to Imperial Federation, it is interesting that Home Rule All Round did not appeal more strongly to Rosebery.

To summarise, Rosebery's commitment to reestablishing an Edinburgh Parliament was limited, but he did secure increased Home Rule for Scotland. Like Gladstone, he realised that Home Rule had reverberations beyond Ireland, but there were many practical obstacles to Scottish Home Rule or Home Rule All Round. He was a consistent advocate of expanded local government and devolution for Scotland but he was never zealous to restore an Edinburgh Parliament.

Conclusion

Rosebery's influence in promoting Scottish affairs is far greater than previously recognized. The establishment of the Scottish Office, the improvement of local government and the development of a Scottish Grand Committee demonstrated his lasting commitment to providing better government for Scotland. Rosebery enjoyed responsibility and authority, and

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[197] Christopher Harvie, Scotland and Nationalism (2nd ed., London 1994), p. 17.

[198] I. G. Mcleod, Scotland and the Liberal Party, 1880 - 1900: Church, Ireland and the Empire: A Family Affair (Glasgow, M.Litt., 1978), p. 139.

his advice was sought by both parties. He was most active in areas where he took the initiative but with regard to issues such as disestablishment and Scottish Home Rule, he was reactive rather than proactive. He disliked following and he resented being bullied.

Rosebery deserves significant credit for reminding Westminster of Scotland's existence and her people's needs. His patriotism never deteriorated into a narrow sectarianism; his love for Scotland never waned. He was the Uncrowned King of Scotland in an age when Sovereigns had become symbolic rather than substantive. Power which previously had been wielded by the individual was shifting to the party, the unions, and even to the masses. For almost three decades, Rosebery held a real position of authority in Scotland and served as her eloquent and powerful spokesman.

6. Rosebery and Irish and Welsh Nationalism

Gladstone in 1885: "A Monologue in Downing Street"

Quoth Shakespeare: "Thou shalt take the tide
And breast it at the flood."
And so I did or so I tried,
And saw the prospect good:
And here I am amid the stream,
But riding safe at anchor-
Regretful of an idle dream,
Good fortune let me thank her.

And yet this figure somewhat fails-
My anchor leaves me free;
For still I seem to spread my sails,
And drift away to sea:-
The shores recede, the waters rise,
The tide is fast and flowing,
A storm is gathering o'er the skies-
I know not where I'm going.[1]

In the 1880s and 1890s, the Irish Question frequently and violently upset British political life. Gladstone's relationship to Ireland and Irish Nationalism has been well documented, but Rosebery's views have yet to be fully analysed. This chapter addresses several questions. Firstly, where did Rosebery differ from Gladstone over the Irish Union? Secondly, Rosebery's views on Ireland, Irish Nationalism and Irish Home Rule require a chronology. Thirdly, Rosebery's relationship with Parnell will be sketched. Finally and briefly, what were Rosebery's views on Wales?

In politics, situations and people change. After retirement, Rosebery asserted, "I do not object to any reasonable change of opinion. A man who always thinks the same from twenty to eighty is generally an ass."[2] Rosebery

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[1] George Cotterell (attributed), The Banquet: A Political Satire (Edinburgh, 1885), p. 13.

[2] Rosebery, "Speech at Trowbridge," October 29, 1904, in The Times, October 31, p. 12.

also noted that in retirement, a person is liable to think and act without restraint. He warned in Napoleon: The Last Phase,

> It is not wise to record every word that falls from a great man in retirement. The mind which is accustomed to constant activity and which is suddenly deprived of employment is an engine without guidance; the tongue without a purpose is not always under control. The great man is apt to soliloquise aloud, and then the suppressed volume of passion, of resentment, of scorn bursts all dams.[3]

This admonition was penned by Rosebery during his long retirement when his emotions burst forth in public letters, private memoranda and most memorably on the public platform.

Rosebery never shared Gladstone's zeal for solving the Irish Question, but he certainly longed to see Ireland more fully integrated into the Empire. Gladstone's passions tended to revolve around nations (e.g. Bulgaria, Ireland), while Rosebery's primary passions were the Empire and Scotland. Rosebery viewed Ireland with Imperial eyes. To put it simply, for Gladstone solving the Irish Question was an end in itself while for Rosebery it was a means to a far greater end. This divergence can be partially explained by two considerations.

Firstly, Gladstone was the leader of the House of Commons where he faced what seemed almost incessant obstruction from the Irish members. The General Election of 1885 was an important watershed. The solid block of 86 Irish Nationalists had the power to maintain or defeat almost any government at will. They proved that they could do more than obstruct. T. P. O'Connor's(**) victory in the Scotland division of Liverpool alerted Gladstone to the growing Irish influence on the British mainland. It was an unwelcome omen for the Liberals, an oracle which Gladstone could not ignore.

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[3] Rosebery, Napoleon: The Last Phase, p. 163.

Rosebery, by contrast, was forever restricted to the House of Lords where he faced a growing Conservative majority. Barred from the Commons, Rosebery was less directly affected by the practical challenges of the Irish Question, and less able to appreciate its immediacy.

Gladstone, Rosebery and the Union of 1800

Secondly, these men were divided by their interpretation of Irish history, particularly over the Union of 1800, which extinguished the independent Irish Parliament. The Scottish Union of 1707 and the Irish Union of 1800 had similar effects and were secured by similar means, but at this time they were viewed far differently. Gladstone described the Irish Union as "a union like the union of the mangled corpse of Hector and the headlong chariot of Achilles."[4] However, the Scottish Union, according to Rosebery,

> was like nothing so much as a poor man marrying an heiress: mortifying to pride at first; irksome perhaps occasionally; in the long run harmonious because founded on interest; eventually it may be moulded into love by the beauty of its offspring.[5]

Scotland had legitimate complaints, but Ireland experienced centuries of injustice and woeful misgovernment. There was then a general consensus as to the merits of the 1707 Union,[6] but the debate over Pitt's Union permeated the political debate in the 1880s and 1890s.

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[4] Gladstone, Special Aspects of the Irish Question (London, 1892), p. 369.

[5] Rosebery, "Address to the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution," November 3, 1871, in Buchan (ed.) Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 98. This passage is striking considering Rosebery's subsequent marriage to Hannah de Rothschild, the wealthiest heiress of her generation.

[6] Gladstone concurred, "Generally it came to be felt in Scotland that enormous benefits had unquestionably followed the Union in the shape of common citizenship and freedom of trade. After 1707, each generation of men, as it rose and lived and passed away, saw the Scottish Union rise in the estimation of the Scottish people. In Ireland the case has been exactly reversed." Gladstone, "Notes and Queries on the Irish Demand," The Nineteenth Century, vol. xxi, February, 1887, pp. 187 - 8.

Gladstone maintained that the Union - by virtue of the means used to secure its enactment - was iniquitous and necessitated reparations, while Rosebery viewed the Union as the best possible solution under the most extreme conditions. Consequently, with regard to Ireland, Rosebery was motivated by expediency, whereas Gladstone was moved supposedly by a desire to expiate former sins. This helps to explain why Gladstone's support for Home Rule from 1886 seems constant while Rosebery's support appears variable.

This difference is exemplified by the two men's views of Pitt. Gladstone vigorously assailed Pitt's later career. Rosebery, however, defended Pitt. Concerning Pitt's Irish policy (1795 to 1800), there was no common ground. From 1886 to 1892, Gladstone published several long pamphlets and articles[7] related to the Union, and Rosebery wrote his famous monograph, Pitt, in which the longest chapter is devoted to Ireland.

Viewing the Union from an Irish perspective, Gladstone condemned Pitt in no uncertain terms. It was "on the part of England or of those who used its authority, combined violence and fraud, baseness, tyranny and cruelty, in a degree rarely if ever paralleled in history."[8] He continued, "the parts of the pander, the jobber, and the swindler were the parts habitually played by this great and strong country towards that smaller and weaker one." The shameful manner in which the bill was passed, Gladstone argued, did not morally bind the Irish people to the Union and explained their subsequent discontent. Gladstone pressed his case, "it is an odious task to record these abominations; but recorded they must be until they have been

[7] Gladstone's articles included, "Lessons of Irish History in the Eighteenth Century" in James Bryce (ed.), Handbook of Home Rule (London, 1887), Gladstone's review of "Ingram's History of the Irish Union" in The Nineteenth Century, vol. xxii, October, 1887, and "Plain Speaking on the Irish Union" in The Nineteenth Century, vol. xxvi, July, 1889.

[8] Gladstone, "Plain Speaking on the Irish Union," p. 1.

confessed, repented and repaired."[9] Gladstone conveyed that his Irish policy was an atonement for the sins of his fathers.

Gladstone's study of Irish history was not detached from public policy or party politics. Though he dated his own conversion to Home Rule from the 1885 General Election, he later admitted in an 1897 interview with Parnell's biographer, Barry O'Brien,

> I am bound to say that I did not know as much about the way the Union was carried when I took up Home Rule as I came to know afterwards. The Union with Ireland has no moral force. It has the force of law, no doubt, but it rests on no moral basis.[10]

Gladstone found his study of Irish history useful and he endeavoured to educate the public. On July 8, 1886, Gladstone wrote to Bryce commissioning what became the Handbook of Home Rule,

> The whole iniquities of the Union, and the subsequent English history which is shameful, though less profoundly and unmixedly shameful, must be laid bare & become common property. The people do not know the case. Remember that Corn Law Repeal was neither (Generally) cared about or understood till Cobden illuminated it with his admirable intellect, Bright putting in the passion.[11]

Gladstone contributed a chapter, "Lessons of Irish History in the Eighteenth Century," to the Handbook of Home Rule, in which he remarked,

> It has for a very long time been my habit, when consulted by young political students, to recommend them carefully to study the characters and events of the American Independence. ... I would now add a twin recommendation to examine and ponder the lessons of Irish history

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[9] Gladstone, "Plain Speaking on the Irish Union," p. 6.

[10] R. Barry O'Brien, The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell, 1846 - 1891 (2 vols., London, 1898), vol. ii, p. 365, an interview between Gladstone and O'Brien on January 28, 1897.

[11] The Gladstone Diaries, vol. xi, p. 585, Gladstone to Bryce dated July 8, 1886.

> during the eighteenth century. The task may not be easy but the reward will be ample.[12]

Gladstone's view of history was not unchallenged.[13] Both Gladstone and Rosebery were products of an age where it was believed that history rightly understood and interpreted could yield valuable lessons for the present. However, from this incident in Irish history, Gladstone and Rosebery drew different lessons.

Gladstone's imagery was striking and evocative: the Union had "the stain of blood is upon the policy; not on one member only, like [Lady?] Macbeth's upon the hand but over the whole body of the scheme. The filthy witness cannot be washed away."[14] Gladstone never lacked eloquent invective, but one commodity was in short supply: time. Battling against his own mortality, Gladstone's last desire was "to see the day - if God shall grant me that enormous favour - when the deepest stain on the English character and the English reputation will be removed by the final work of doing justice to Ireland."[15]

To secure this end, Gladstone drew support from many quarters. Burke gave him ammunition, "That great Irishman Mr Burke, who unhappily was taken from among mankind before the Union was carried, was always

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[12] Gladstone, "Lessons of Irish History in the Eighteenth Century," p. 263.

[13] See Lord Brabourne, "Facts and Fictions in Irish History," in Blackwoods Magazine, vol. 140, October, 1886 and "Rosebery v. Gladstone," in Blackwoods Magazine, vol. 151, February, 1892. Lord Brabourne (1829 - 1893) [Edward Hugessen Knatchbull-Hugessen] was a prolific contributor to literary journals and joined the Conservative Party shortly after he was elevated to the peerage by Gladstone in 1880. Rosebery irreverently quipped that Brabourne "must find his coronet a crown of thorns, because ever since he has had a seat in the House of Lords, it has been his constant and mournful fate to vote against the Government." Edward Rodgers and Edmund J. Moyle, Man of the Moment: No. 2 The Rt. Hon. Lord Rosebery (London, 1902), p. 30.

[14] Gladstone, "Ingram's History of the Irish Union," p. 465.

[15] Gladstone, "Speech at Swansea," June 4, 1887, in The Times, June 6, p. 10.

an opponent of the plan and principle of the Union."[16] In 1886, Gladstone believed that Burke also would have supported his Home Rule scheme. Gladstone himself needed no convincing. He believed the Union to be conceived in iniquity and nurtured by bribery and corruption; it was indefensible.

Gladstone's political career was permeated by a keen moral fervour. None could reach and hold the moral high-ground as he did. His arguments were evocative and rousing but, as Disraeli noted, he could become "inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity." Gladstone viewed his world and its history in the stark colours of black and white eschewing any intermediate hues. In 1889, Rosebery recorded the following outburst in his diary, "Mr G furious after dinner about Pitt's later Irish policy - the worst thing in history, worse than St Bartholomew's.[17] Acknowledged afterwards, 'I am in a passion.'"[18] His initial steps toward Home Rule may have been halting but as he explored the Irish Union further, Gladstone's resolve and fervour were solidified.

While Gladstone viewed the Union through Irish eyes, Rosebery (and Pitt) approached the subject from a British and even an imperial perspective. The basis for Rosebery's views on Ireland are detailed in his biography of Pitt. Pitt was Rosebery's first political biography, and the subject was fraught with danger. As his friend, Reggie Brett, noted in a favourable review,

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[16] Gladstone, "Speech at Birmingham," November 7, 1888, in The Times, November 8, p. 10.

[17] On August 24/25, 1572 between 2,000 and 70,000 Huguenots (Protestants) were massacred by Roman Catholic nobles and citizens in Paris. This was another bloody chapter in the religious civil war in France during the Reformation.

[18] Crewe, vol. i, p. 347. Rosebery also noted in his diary on October 29, 1891, Mr G "lost control of himself (for the third time in my experience) in speaking of the Irish rebellion of 1798. In vain did I try to keep him off and turn the subject." Crewe, vol. ii, p. 375.

> Hampered by the knowledge that every line would be scrutinized for references to the living controversy, he nevertheless has boldly defended Mr Pitt's policy. He described it as "generous and comprehensive in conception as it was patriotic in motive."[19]

Rosebery realised that it was impossible to discuss Irish history without reference to current events, because the Irish Question,

> has never passed into history, for it has never passed out of politics. No number of previous volumes will suffice to ballast or preserve the innocent investigator; his fate is certain and foreseen; for the moment his foot rests in 1795 he irresistibly slips on to 1886; and rebounding from 1886, he is soon soused in 1891.[20]

His portrayal of Pitt was sympathetic but reasonably balanced. Rosebery drew much of his inspiration from both Macaulay and his uncle Lord Stanhope. Rosebery's favourite work by Macaulay was his biography of the younger Pitt for the Encyclopaedia Britannica.[21] Macaulay sympathized with Pitt but did not dwell at length on his Irish policy. He conceded that Pitt "was the first English Minister who formed great designs for the benefit of Ireland ... Had he been able to do all that he wished, it is probable that a wise and liberal policy would have averted the rebellion of 1798."[22]

Unlike Gladstone, Rosebery did not focus on Ireland's domestic sufferings. He admitted the savagery of the government's repression in response to the 1796 and 1798 risings. He described the government's actions

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[19] Reginald Brett, Viscount Esher, Today and Tomorrow (London, 1910), p. 204. Brett's review originally appeared in The Nineteenth Century, vol. xxxi, January, 1892, 7 - 23.

[20] Rosebery, Pitt, p. 172.

[21] Trevelyan later noted, "You, Morley, Bryce, and Harcourt had at one time or another told me that the short biography of the younger Pitt was the work of his which you liked best. And a kindly providence ordered that it should be his last." RP, MS 10063, f. 244, Trevelyan to Rosebery dated January 20, 1927.

[22] "William Pitt [the Younger]," in Thomas Babington Macaulay, Miscellaneous Writings and Speeches of Lord Macaulay (London, 1873), p. 422.

in 1798 as being "distinguished by constant horrors of outrage and reprisal."[23] He admitted the existence of corruption and bribery but questioned critics (including Gladstone) who judged Pitt by the standards of the 1890s,

> To Pitt alone is meted out a different measure. He alone is judged not by the end of the eighteenth but by the end of the nineteenth century. And why? Because the Irish Question which he attempted to settle is an unsettled question still. He alone of the statesmen of the eighteenth century, with the exception of Burke and Chesterfield, saw its importance and grappled with it manfully.[24]

Central to Rosebery's [and Macaulay's] defence of Pitt was that the Union was only a portion of Pitt's larger Irish policy - which included Catholic emancipation,

> It is Pitt's sinister destiny to be judged by the petty fragment of a large policy which he did not live to carry out: a policy unhappy in execution and result, but which was, it may be fairly maintained, as generous and comprehensive in conception as it was patriotic in motive.[25]

By contrast, Gladstone focused on the outcome rather the intentions of Pitt's Union, and consequently his strong antipathy is understandable.

Gladstone divided Pitt's career into two halves. The first part up to 1793 - the beginning of the war with France - was praiseworthy, while his

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[23] Rosebery, Pitt, p. 138.

[24] Rosebery, Pitt, p. 193. Rosebery gives more credit to Chesterfield (his remote ancestor) than he deserves. Chesterfield was Viceroy of Ireland in 1745 and he prevented the Jacobite rising from spreading across the Irish Sea, but he did little else for Ireland.

[25] Rosebery, Pitt, p. 200. Rosebery clearly follows Macaulay's line. Macaulay asserted in his brief biography of Pitt, "It is only just to his memory to say that he formed a scheme of policy, so grand and so humane that it would alone entitle him to a high place among statesmen ... but Pitt would only execute one half of what he had projected." Miscellaneous Writings and Speeches of Lord Macaulay, p. 423.

later career merited only scorn and derision. By contrast, Rosebery contended, "It is not possible to draw a line across the life of a statesman with the declaration that all is white on one side and all is black on the other."[26] Gladstone did not agree. When Rosebery sent a copy of Pitt to Gladstone, the G.O.M. cleverly, "read the first half of Rosebery's book [up to 1793], and then wrote to congratulate, knowing that he would not be able to do so after the second half."[27] In his letter to Rosebery, Gladstone noted,

> My anticipations were high, but it has passed them. It is (in my view) the ablest monograph of the kind that I have read ... At p 123 we come to the divergence of the roads on the war [i.e. the war with Revolutionary France]. You go one way and I another. My summing up of the matter is this that it is probably at once the biggest error recorded in history, and the most excusable.[28]

Rosebery did not concur with Gladstone, though he admitted that Pitt was flawed.[29]

Despite their differences, Rosebery and Gladstone continued to sit at the same Cabinet table. Concluding his review, Brett noted, "Lord Rosebery issues from the ordeal uncompromised and logically consistent as a defender of Mr Pitt and a lieutenant of Mr Gladstone."[30] This interpretation was not universally accepted. Critics of Gladstone's policy, such as Lord Brabourne of the Tory Blackwoods Magazine maintained,

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[26] Rosebery, Pitt, p. 279.

[27] Maurice V. Brett (ed.), Journals and Letters of Reginald Viscount Esher (4 vols., London, 1934 - 38), vol. i, p. 156, journal entry dated January 19, 1892.

[28] RP, MS 10024, f. 56, Gladstone to Rosebery dated November 25, 1891. Gladstone made no mention of Rosebery's treatment of Pitt's Irish policy.

[29] On December 16, 1891, Rosebery wrote to Hamilton, "It is quite possible that I do not answer explicitly enough Lecky's charge that Pitt's words were better than his deeds." Hamilton MSS, Add MS 48612A, f. 166.

[30] Brett, Today and Tomorrow, p. 204.

> If the truth be as Lord Rosebery believes it to be and as he has shown it to be in his recent publication, it is hardly possible that he should remain bound to politicians whose whole policy is founded upon the assumption that the truth is something precisely the reverse.[31]

Rosebery's Irish policy was based largely on expediency and pragmatism. Consequently, he could consistently support Pitt's Union of 1800, Gladstone's Home Rule Bills of 1886 and 1893 and strenuously oppose the Campbell-Bannerman's 'step-by-step' declaration in 1905 and Asquith's third Home Rule Bill of 1912. Gladstone, however, believed that he was called to solve the Irish Question - to remove this blot upon Britain's honour.

Rosebery on Ireland

> Time and circumstance and opportunity paint with heedless hands and garish colours on the canvass of a man's life; so that the result is less frequently a finished portrait than a palette of squeezed tints.
> Rosebery, Pitt, p. 10.

The desire to find consistency and coherence in a man's career is ever tempting, but this quest proves illusory and false. Human nature is variable and it stands to reason that the history of humanity is characterised by change. Rosebery sought continuity in terms of his foreign policy, but with regard to Ireland, an overall consistency is absent. By contrast, after 1886, Gladstone sought not only to convince the nation that Home Rule was the proper solution to the Irish Question, but also that his conversion to Home Rule was consistent with his political creed.[32]

From Midlothian onwards, Rosebery could not avoid the Irish Question. Prior to the General Election of 1885, Rosebery spoke infrequently

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[31] Brabourne, "Rosebery v. Gladstone," p. 169.

[32] See Gladstone's Home Rule Manifesto (1886) and The Irish Question (1886).

on Ireland, but his utterances carried weight. After Argyll resigned over the 1881 Irish Land Act, Rosebery became the undisputed Liberal voice of Scotland. In Greenock, on November 3, 1881, he admitted, "I am one of those who have never denied the existence of great wrongs on our part towards Ireland."[33] He firmly supported Gladstone's Irish Land Act, but he deprecated the idea that one measure could solve the problem. Rosebery proved his loyalty to Gladstone, but a slight rift is visible between him and his chief. Gladstone believed that a great piece of legislation could solve the Irish Question. Rosebery, however, realised that the Irish Question was more comprehensive.

Gladstone sought to pacify Ireland while Rosebery hoped to integrate Ireland into the Empire. These goals were not mutually exclusive but they led to a divergence. In 1881, at the height of the Land War, Ireland was in a state of near anarchy, the House of Commons was reduced to an impotent mockery and by the end of the year most Nationalist leaders including Parnell were imprisoned. At Hull, on December 7, 1881, Rosebery addressed Gladstone's critics who "seemed to think the problem first arose last year."[34] He used an imperial frame of reference which typified his political career. "The question of Ireland is one which at this moment affects every fibre of every nerve of Empire."[35] But how did the Irish Question affect the Empire? First, Ireland had been a consistent exporter of people. A disaffected populace implied disaffected emigrants who carried an anti-English or anti-British prejudice wherever they settled - and the Irish settled in large numbers throughout the Empire and in the United States. Secondly, Ireland drained the Treasury and stymied Parliament. Thus Rosebery could

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[33] Rosebery, "Speech at Greenock," November 3, 1881, in The Scotsman, November 4, p. 5.

[34] Rosebery, "Speech at Hull," December 7, 1881, in The Times, December 8, p. 10.

[35] Rosebery, "Speech at Hull," December 7, 1881, in The Scotsman, December 8, p. 5. For many of Rosebery's early speeches, a condensed version appears in The Times, while a full report is given by The Scotsman.

legitimately see the Irish Question as an Imperial Question.

Rosebery soon turned his attention to Irish history. On May 3, 1882, his friend Lord Young advised him to read "the Irish chapters in Lecky's new volumes."[36] An ardent Unionist, Lecky paradoxically helped convince Gladstone and others that the best solution for Ireland was Home Rule.[37] Rosebery carefully read Lecky's works but he disagreed with him about Pitt's Irish policy.[38]

On May 6th and 7th, 1882, Rosebery penned a memorandum (which he neither sent to Gladstone nor acted upon) giving the first significant insight into his thoughts on Ireland and the management of Irish affairs. Rosebery was suspicious of the 'Kilmainham Treaty' through which leading Irish Nationalists, including Parnell, were released from jail and Rosebery was deeply troubled to be associated with any policy with which he disagreed. He specifically opposed linking the Liberal Party with the Irish Party,

> Would it not have been better to introduce all your measures and then, having shewn your hand both to the suspects and to Ireland, you would know the effect of them on Ireland and be able to sound the suspects and to judge if you could rely on the support of either or both. Now you are bound while they are free. The birds have flown;

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[36] RP, MS 10078, f. 107, Young to Rosebery dated May 3, 1882. Young referred to volumes iii and iv of Lecky's A History of England in the Eighteenth Century which covered the volatile years, 1760 - 1784. Originally, Lecky's 8-volume History of England (1878 - 1890) was published with large sections on Ireland. In 1892, when the History was published in a cabinet edition, the Irish and British material were published separately as the A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century (5 vols.) and A History of England in the Eighteenth Century (7 vols.).

[37] R. Barry O'Brien observed that the facts presented by Lecky, Goldwin Smith and Dicey, "are upon one side and their opinions on the other ... Their facts I venture to assert, have made more Home Rulers than their opinions can unmake," in "Unionist Case for Home Rule" in Bryce (ed.), Handbook of Home Rule, p. 154.

[38] Lecky noted, "the Irish policy of Pitt appears to be both morally and politically deserving of almost unmitigated condemnation," quoted in O'Brien, "Unionist Case for Home Rule," p. 176.

it is you who are in the cage.[39]

The metaphor is not inappropriate. As the Liberal Party discovered, the cost of the Irish alliance was dear.

This memorandum raises the question, what stuck in Rosebery's gullet about Kilmainham? Why was he opposed to releasing the Irish Nationalists? Rosebery was isolated in the Lords. He did not know the Irish members and he did not have to deal with them. Gladstone realised that some compromise was essential if Parliament was to function at all. Rosebery can be forgiven for fearing this arrangement. The Land War was raging, all major Nationalist leaders were in jail, and now the Liberal Party was adopting a plan of conciliation. Possibly Rosebery feared that Ireland was primed to explode and that such a conflagration could also engulf and destroy the Liberal Party. Apart from these factors, it is important to note that Rosebery in 1882 was taking a position on Ireland, alongside of Cowper[40] and Forster, on the right wing of the party - to the right even of Hartington!

Concerning his personal position, Rosebery wrote, "I suddenly find myself embarked in an enterprise which I cannot justify or defend. If I remain in the government I am for life connected, however humbly, with this policy." Again, Rosebery is not here referring to Home Rule, but to a policy

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[39] RP, MS 10176, f. 49, Rosebery's memorandum dated May 6, 1882. [Given in full in Rhodes James, p. 128] Also on May 6, Rosebery wrote a brief draft letter to Gladstone (which was also suppressed), "I hate bothering you for I feel as if I were a fly perching on the incubus which already weights down Atlas. But I do want you to give me five minutes (and you know I do not overstay my time) about a matter which puzzles me greatly, and which is of great importance to me as a member of your government." [RP, MS 10176, f. 51, Rosebery to Gladstone [draft] dated May 6, 1882] This letter along with the extract from his diary suggests that Rosebery wanted clarification of Gladstone's Irish policy and that he was not planning to resign immediately.

[40] Francis Thomas de Grey Cowper (1834 - 1905), 7th Earl Cowper was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1880 - 82). He resigned along with Forster in protest of Gladstone's 'Kilmainham Treaty.'

of conciliation with the nationalist leadership. Rosebery believed his position to be untenable, and he immediately considered resignation, but hesitated,

> There is my connection to Mr Gladstone. By that I mean my personal devotion to him & my sense that he deserved all support at this moment. If I fail him in this hour of need, for such it is a personal defection which he would feel much more than my function in the government would indicate.[41]

On the afternoon of May 7th, Rosebery learned of the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish on the 6th.[42] Rosebery instinctively put aside his concerns to rally around the Grand Old Man.

This memorandum is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it shows Rosebery's inclination to quit at times of crisis or disagreement. Secondly, it demonstrated a propensity to distrust and even fear the Irish leadership. Thirdly, it showed Rosebery's persistent fear of linking the Liberal Party with the Irish Nationalist Party. Cooperation was necessary at times, but an alliance would only aid the Nationalists while hampering the Liberals. Indirectly, this memorandum underscored Rosebery's isolation in the Lords. His perspective was limited whereas Gladstone was confronted each day with Parnell's Party.

In early 1885, Chamberlain introduced a Central Board Scheme to

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[41] RP, MS 10176, f. 49, memorandum dated May 6, 1882. At the end of this memorandum Rosebery hastily noted, "This paper was interrupted by the news of C[avendish]'s assassination."

[42] In his diary [Crewe, vol. i, p. 152], Rosebery noted, "May 6th - Much perplexed as to my position, as to which I wrote a paper. I am clear that I disagree with the policy of Gov't. but am almost clear that I ought not to resign. Finally wrote to Mr Gladstone to ask him to give me five minutes on Monday morning; this with a view to asking him what is the exact position of a subordinate like myself with reference to Cabinet policy.
May 7th - Rode from 10.30 am to 1.15. A melancholy and perplexed ride. On my return at 2.15 learned the news of the assassination of poor F. Cavendish and Burke. They might have taken a more brilliant life, they could not have taken a nobler life than F. Cavendish's. Of course this event cleared my course completely. All hands are wanted at the pumps."

which Rosebery gave at least partial support.[43] At a Cabinet meeting, Rosebery wrote Chamberlain the following note: "Would you like to take a stroll tomorrow, or dine quietly tomorrow evening? I am a Scottish home-ruler as well as Irish." Chamberlain replied, "Your last remark is most to the point. I had a talk with Cooper the other night and found him in favour of a scheme for Scotland which is exactly my own for Ireland. I suspected that you might have been prompting him."[44] Chamberlain sent Rosebery papers concerning his Central Board Scheme for Ireland and noted "I need not point out that such a scheme as I propose would be applicable to Scotland & if desired to Wales."[45] Rosebery was candid in his reply,

> My practical knowledge of Ireland is almost nil. But with that saving clause (and I admit that it is a considerable one); some such scheme as yours is what I should imagine to be the object all should have in view.[46]

Rosebery highlighted one of his major weaknesses with regard to Ireland: a lack of practical information, but nonetheless he does concur (in May 1885!) that some major reorganisation of Irish affairs is required.

This overture was unfruitful, but Rosebery's admissions were

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[43] In 1889, however, Rosebery completely rejected Chamberlain's plan to give Home Rule simultaneously to all nations in the United Kingdom, "How is it that people should strain at the gnat of a Dublin Parliament and be prepared to swallow the four camels of Provincial Councils." Arthur Wallace, The Earl of Rosebery: His Words and His Works (London, 1894), p. 52. This is an allusion to Matthew, chapter 23, verse 24.

[44] Crewe, vol. i, p. 225. These notes are not contained in the Rosebery Papers or the Chamberlain Papers. In the National Library of Scotland, more than twenty five letters from Chamberlain to Rosebery are preserved, while in the Birmingham University Library only six letters from Rosebery to Chamberlain are preserved. The archivist at Birmingham noted that during the 1880s Chamberlain did not systematically retain all of his correspondence.

[45] RP, MS 10083, f. 31, Chamberlain to Rosebery dated May 17, 1885. For a detailed treatment of Chamberlain's Irish scheme see C. H. D. Howard, "Joseph Chamberlain, Parnell and the Irish 'Central Board' Scheme, 1884 - 5" Irish Historical Studies, vol. viii (1952 - 3), 324 - 61.

[46] Joseph Chamberlain MSS, Birmingham University Library, MS JC 5/61/1, Rosebery to Chamberlain dated May 20, 1885.

remarkable. Rosebery approves of Home Rule for both Scotland and Ireland. Rosebery uses the term Home Rule in its broader sense of increased local autonomy, whereas Chamberlain refers to his own Central Board Scheme. Neither man is advocating a Dublin Parliament in a form acceptable to Parnell and company. Nonetheless this candid communique by Rosebery is striking. But it leads to the question, what was Rosebery seeking from Chamberlain? Did he want to insure that Scotland was included in any new scheme which Chamberlain proposed or was Rosebery trying to ingratiate himself with Chamberlain and the Radical wing of the party? No other documentation of this meeting exists, but two facts remain: Chamberlain's board scheme was rejected and Rosebery eventually cast his lot with Gladstone.

In October 1885, Rosebery publicly aired his views on the Irish Question after Parnell directed Irish electors on the British mainland to vote Tory. Rosebery's speech in Paisley on October 15 was one of his most significant and most quoted utterances. According to his opponents, this speech proved Rosebery's inconsistency and insincerity, because he seemingly repudiated Home Rule in October only to embrace it a few months later. One obvious explanation is that this was a political address designed to undermine the Conservatives who were then allied with the Irish Nationalists.

The speech merits close attention. Rosebery's greatest fear proved to be prophetic. "I hope that no drowning government will catch at the slipping straw of the Irish Vote." He also focused on a question which many Liberals asked, "Could Ireland and her leaders be trusted?" Rosebery responded,

> Mr Parnell wishes Ireland to be treated as a colony. But there is one great and essential difference between Ireland and our colonies, and it is this - that the colonies are loyal, and Ireland I greatly fear, is not. I wish I could believe it but I cannot. The state of Ireland at the present

moment seems to forbid such a belief.[47]

It is crucial to note that this is not a definitive rejection of Irish national demands, but rather an assessment of the current situation in Ireland. Implicit in this declaration is the proviso that if Ireland changes, the Liberal party could change its approach. Rosebery realised that there was one response to Ireland which was impossible: indifference,

> You cannot shut your eyes to this problem of Ireland. You must face it ... Certain words are more dreaded than pestilence, or famine or the tax-gatherer himself. I will take as two instances of that, Socialism and Home Rule. I am not a Socialist, and I don't suppose I am a Home Ruler. But I think a politician is blind who fails, because of prejudice as regards words, to recognize the essential benefit which may lie in one or other part of a particular system ... I am not afraid of the word Home Rule ... The fact is that the passion and the capacity for Home Rule grow up simultaneously in a nation. What is local government but Home Rule; and what is Home Rule but local government?[48]

Rosebery's critics fastened upon his admission that he was not a Home Ruler, but there is more to this statement. Rosebery is being coy. He had told Chamberlain several months previously that he was an Irish (and a Scottish) Home Ruler, and at this point he must have been aware that Gladstone was considering a new approach to the Irish Question. However at this time the party was not committed to Home Rule though Rosebery's words ("I don't suppose I am a Home Ruler") suggest that this situation could change.

Also implied in this admission is that Rosebery viewed Home Rule as a means for securing better local government. However, the Irish demanded a Parliament in Dublin. Rosebery used terms like local government, devolution and Home Rule interchangeably: the Irish did not. Rosebery

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[47] Rosebery "Speech at Paisley," October 15, 1885, in The Times, October 16, p. 10.

[48] Ibid.

concluded, "as sure as I am standing here, local government or Home Rule will come, in a very wide form, either in this way or in some other; in any case it is inevitable."[49] This is true but it does not follow that the Irish people would accept some form of increased local government in lieu of a Parliament. This proved to be a fatal flaw in Rosebery's Irish policy.

This was a time of great flux. The following extract from Chamberlain's diary illustrates this uncertainty. Chamberlain recorded a conversation between himself, Rosebery, and Morley on June 30, 1894,

> Rosebery ... reminded me of his action in the Cabinet of 1885 when national councils were discussed, and said he had supported me then because he believed - as he did still - that some kind of extended local government might be given to England and Scotland as well as to Ireland ... I said that in 1885 we all talked of Home Rule without clear ideas of what it meant. It had not then been defined. He said it was just the same now. I expressed surprise and he said: "Where has it been defined?" I said that I thought the leader of the Liberal Party had brought in two bills in 1886 and 1893, and that these must be taken as the definition of Home Rule in the future. He said, "Not a bit of it; they do not commit us" or words to that effect. Then he referred to the Cabinet of 1886 and my resignation. He said, "I have always thought that you ought not to have been allowed to go. We had been told beforehand that you were irreconcilable, but I was struck by your evident anxiety not to break up the party, and I believe that our differences might have been arranged."[50]

Granted some care needs to be taken with regard to such a reminiscence, but it does point to Rosebery's variable commitment to Home Rule as the solution to the Irish Question. (It also gives further evidence that Gladstone was not sorry to see Chamberlain leave the Cabinet in 1886). As Premier, Rosebery more fully understood the burden which Home Rule placed on the Liberals and he bucked at being committed *ad infinitum* to this policy. It was a

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[49] Ibid, p. 10.

[50] Garvin and Amery, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, vol. ii, p. 598, extract from Chamberlain's diary dated June 30, 1894.

pragmatic acceptance rather than a dogmatic adherence. Rosebery accepted Gladstone's Home Rule Bills of 1886 and 1893 because they were appropriate for the time. He never accepted Home Rule (i.e. a Dublin Parliament) as the only solution to the Irish Question.

At the General Election of 1885, Rosebery - at age 38 - was already a key figure in managing and directing the Liberal Party. After Gladstone's 1885 Midlothian Campaign, Hamilton noted in his diary,

> The enthusiasm of the crowd outside the station for Rosebery knew no bounds. They mobbed him and shouted for him. "Rosbery, Ros-bery" was the universal cry, the crowd running with the carriage till we were fairly out of the Town. There never was a man who had the Scotchmen so completely at his feet. He is nearly as much 'the uncrowned King of Scotland' as Parnell is 'the uncrowned King of Ireland.'[51]

While this is a biased account, it gives some idea of the position which Rosebery held in the estimation of his fellow Scots. During the election, Rosebery could not ignore Irish demands. He noted that high above all other issues, "comes the supreme billow of all, with appalling volume and with curling crest - the wave of Irish demand and of Irish discontent."[52] As a party man, Rosebery realised the necessity for fighting a battle in close formation. He pledged,

> to set an example at this moment which I believe everyone in this hall will be willing to follow, in putting aside these particular subjects,

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[51] Bahlman (ed.), Hamilton's Diary, 1885 - 1906, p. 12, entry dated November 28, 1885.

[52] Rosebery, "Banquet Given in Honour of Lord Rosebery by the Scottish Liberal Association," November 13, 1885, in The Scotsman, November 14, p. 10. In a letter to Gladstone on December 18, Argyll fastened upon this image, "Rosebery expressed it with beautiful sympathy when he said in some speech this year 'whatever wave of public opinion, we see advancing, for heaven's sake let us be on the crest of it!' And this is called leadership!" Ina Erskine Campbell, the Dowager Duchess of Argyll (ed.), George Douglas, Eighth Duke of Argyll (1823 -1900): Autobiography & Memoirs (2 vols., London, 1906), vol. ii, p. 400, Argyll to Gladstone dated December 18, 1885.

> which I have myself at heart wherever they may interfere in the slightest degree with the victory of the cause to which we are attached.[53]

Since his resignation in 1883, Rosebery had matured quickly. To illustrate this contrast, in May 1883, he vented his frustration to Hamilton,

> I confess I think Scotland is as usual treated abominably. Justice for Ireland means everything done for her even to the payment of the native's debts. Justice to Scotland means insulting neglect. I leave for Scotland next week with the view of blowing up a prison or shooting a policeman.[54]

Rosebery's patronising tone (i.e. referring to the Irish as natives) had softened and his priorities had altered. Rosebery realised that the Liberal cause depended on Gladstone's victory - all other interests or agendas were secondary.

While Rosebery publicly reaffirmed his commitment to Gladstone, he was actively involved in the complex intrigues between the three major parties. These were months of uncertainty and Rosebery was keen to maintain and even augment his powerful position in the party. On November 25, 1885, Labouchere wrote to Chamberlain, "I get a letter every day from Rosebery asking for this and that information."[55] Rosebery gathered information to insure that he knew which way to turn when the time for decision arrived. The storm caused by the 'Hawarden Kite' forced politicians to line up on one side of the Home Rule divide. Rosebery was inclined to follow Gladstone, and his decision was confirmed by the reaction in Scotland.

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[53] Rosebery, "Banquet Given in Honour of Lord Rosebery by the Scottish Liberal Association," November 13, 1885, in The Scotsman, November 14, p. 10.

[54] Hamilton MSS, Add MS 48612A, f. 12, Rosebery to Hamilton, n.d. [prior to December 9, 1882].

[55] Algar Labouchere Thorold, The Life of Henry Labouchere (London, 1913), p. 243, Labouchere to Chamberlain dated November 25, 1885.

On December 19, Labouchere wrote to Chamberlain, "Rosebery writes to tell me that the 'revelations' [i.e. the Hawarden Kite] are well received in Scotland, and that there will be no difficulty there."[56] Any possible doubt was removed: Rosebery knew that his position was alongside Gladstone.

Following the 1885 General Election, the House of Commons stood deadlocked, the shaky alliance of the Conservatives and the Irish Nationalists exactly equalled the strength of the Liberal Party.[57] Prior to the election, Gladstone honestly claimed, "I do not yet know what the wish of Ireland is,"[58] but the election of 86 Irish Nationalists was a clear mandate. He remarked many years later, "I set the Home Rule question on foot exclusively in obedience to the call of Ireland, that call being in my judgement constitutional and conclusive."[59] Rosebery defended Gladstone's conversion even after he had abandoned Gladstone's solution.[60] Hammond who was sympathetic to Gladstone, maintained, "many nations had acted justly out of necessity but at this time a great nation was to act justly from choice. This was the essence of Gladstone's Home Rule plan."[61]

Gladstone's acceptance of Irish Home Rule divided his followers then and continues to divide historians. The question remains, was Gladstone sincere or was he merely clutching to the last straws of power? To his

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[56] Thorold, The Life of Henry Labouchere, p. 243, Labouchere to Chamberlain dated December 19, 1885.

[57] Following the 1885 General Election, the House stood deadlocked: 335 Liberals versus 249 Conservatives and 86 Irish Nationalists.

[58] W. E. Gladstone, Political Speeches in Scotland 1885 (Edinburgh, 1886), p. 78.

[59] Barry O'Brien, The Life of Parnell, vol. ii, p. 355. Letter from Gladstone to O'Brien dated December 11, 1895.

[60] In 1899, Rosebery asserted, "In 1828, one Irish election was held to warrant Peel in a great change of policy: in 1886 eighty-five were declared insufficient to justify Mr. Gladstone." Rosebery, Sir Robert Peel, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, pp. 224 - 5. The allusion is to O'Connell's election at Clare which convinced Peel that Catholic Emancipation was inevitable.

[61] J. L. Hammond, Gladstone and the Irish Nation (2nd ed., Hamden, Connecticut, 1964), p. 737.

admirers, "Gladstone was the heir of Europe's centuries of hope and sorrow, her tempests in his blood, her burdens on his brow, her ancient wisdom in his eagle eyes."[62] While an opponent noted, "A poet has said that men may rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things. Mr Gladstone has many dead selves but it is still debatable whether he rose higher."[63] If Gladstone simply wanted to retain power, he never would have introduced the Home Rule Bill in 1886 because the Liberals could rule if they remained united, but defeat was inevitable if they were divided. Also, his second Home Rule Bill, introduced when he was 83 against almost impossible odds, clearly negates the view that Gladstone was simply hungry for power. In truth, Gladstone believed he was charged by the Almighty to solve the Irish Question. Gladstone's last words in the debate on the first Home Rule Bill encapsulate his desperate desire to secure this measure. "Think I beseech you, think well, think wisely, think, not for the moment but for the years that are to come, before you reject this bill."[64] The first Home Rule Bill was defeated by an opposition bolstered by the support of 93 dissentient Liberals.

Accepting the Foreign Office in 1886, Rosebery clearly nailed his colours to the Home Rule mast. Even though in April 1886, Hamilton noted in his diary, "As to Ireland, [Rosebery] thinks little of it. He is totally absorbed in his foreign affairs. He says, he takes no interest in the Irish Question, and (fortunately for him) his colleagues take no interest in foreign questions."[65] However, in public (especially during the years 1886 - 90), Rosebery was firmly Gladstonian on Ireland. On June 17, 1886, Rosebery spoke as the President of the Scottish Association to Promote Self-Government

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[62] Ibid, p. 739.

[63] Thomas MacKnight, Ulster As It Is (London, 1896), p. 355.

[64] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 306, col. 1240, June 7, 1886.

[65] Hamilton MSS, Add MS 48,643, f. 63, Hamilton's diary entry dated, April 2, 1886. Cooke and Vincent attribute a quote to Rosebery which helps to explain his inattention, "Ireland is not yet a foreign country: when it is I shall look after it," in A. B. Cooke and John Vincent, The Governing Passion (Brighton, 1974), p. 134.

for Ireland, one of the myriad of local or national political organisations which disappeared as quickly as it arose. He acknowledged the Liberals' setback but urged, "you may kill the bill. You cannot kill the policy."[66] Some form of Home Rule was inevitable, but "the difference is that the policy can come grudgingly or with grace."[67] Here Rosebery is not only toeing the Gladstonian line, he is echoing Gladstone's generous spirit.

Politically Home Rule did have some benefits. Home Rule thinned out the bloated ranks of the Liberal Party making healthier growth possible. Rosebery wrote to Lord Randolph Churchill that the Liberals were no longer "a flabby disconnected majority, but a compact minority united by a principle."[68] This statement is also indicative of Rosebery's general optimism at this time. He soon realised that a "compact" party had many challenges too. After 1890, his view of politics and the Liberal Party was far darker.

Rosebery read Irish history incessantly - for his own benefit and in preparation for his Pitt. On his trip to India and Egypt, he gave great attention to Irish subjects and Irish authors. As recorded in his literary journals, Rosebery read Gladstone's Speeches on the Irish Question in 1886, Swift's Tale of a Tub, Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France and Lecky's Leaders of Irish Public Opinion and History of England in the Eighteenth Century. Rosebery considered the Irish Question critically from both an historical and a practical viewpoint.

After returning to Britain from his second Colonial tour in 1887, he

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[66] Rosebery, "Address at Glasgow," June 17, 1886, in The Times, June 18, p. 11.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Rosebery to Lord Randolph Churchill dated July 1887 in Robert Rhodes James, Lord Randolph Churchill (London, 1959), p. 322. Due to the recent wrangling over the Churchill Papers, public access to the Lord Randolph Churchill Papers has been restricted. After much effort, I was able to obtain photocopies of some of Rosebery's letters to Lord Randolph, but this letter was not included. Thus, I rely upon Rhodes James's citation.

devoted his first speech to Ireland. Speaking in Glasgow on April 27, he considered the Irish Question as a choice between conciliation or coercion. In one of his most generous speeches toward the Irish, Rosebery attempted to understand the Irish character (though he knew few Irishmen and had never visited Ireland), "I believe the strongest feeling in the Irish nature - that one we have imperfectly understood, and which has caused so much trouble - is this, the hatred of all external interference."[69] In this same address, Rosebery spoke positively about Grattan's Parliament, though he failed to mention that this body was exclusively Protestant. Rosebery noted that this parliament had two merits,

> In the first place, it was what the people wanted ... therefore when you wish to give benefit to a nation, it is better to give something that it likes and understands, rather than something that it neither likes nor understands. The second merit of that Irish parliament was this that in time of war it was the staunch ally of the British government - a staunch ally, and not a source of weakness.[70]

Here is a clear encapsulation of the Gladstonian view of Ireland. Firstly, there was the desire to give Ireland what she wanted. Secondly, there was the basic and fundamental belief that Ireland was loyal and that any subordinate parliament would likewise remain loyal.[71] Rosebery trusted Parnell. However, in 1890, this trust was shattered and Rosebery never fully trusted another Irish leader.

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[69] Rosebery, "Address to Glasgow Liberal Association," April 27, 1887, in The Times, April 28, p. 10.

[70] Rosebery, "Address to Glasgow Liberal Association," in The Times, April 28, 1887, p. 10. Rosebery is taking an independent line from Macaulay, who strongly denounced this short-lived body.

[71] Barry O'Brien gave this speech fulsome praise, "The Irish people have stated distinctly what they want, namely the right to make their own laws in their own land ... It has never been stated with greater force than by Lord Rosebery speaking in Glasgow in 1887." R. Barry O'Brien, Irish Memories (London, 1904), p. 227.

Rosebery, never averse to an oratorical flourish, closed his address by using words of Scotland's immortal bard to charm his Glasgow audience.

> Raise yourselves above party passions and all the grossness and falsehood that they inspire, to that higher and rarer and purer atmosphere where there are no Whigs or Tories or Gladstonians or Unionists, or Scotsmen or Irishmen, but simply men. 'A man's a man for a' that.' Deal with your suffering fellow subjects in Ireland - that honest, industrious, God-fearing population - as you would have them deal with you.[72]

Here, Rosebery sought a common ground and a higher ground. He tried to efface prejudice against the Irish. In speaking of a "God-fearing population," Rosebery sought common ground for Protestants to support this measure which was aimed largely at redressing the grievances of a Catholic nation. On July 28, 1888, at Bolton, Rosebery went so far as to maintain, "an old proverb says that 'all roads lead to Rome' I believe that all roads lead to Irish Home Rule."[73] Not coincidentally, both Bolton and Glasgow contained large Irish Catholic populations - his generosity was well placed. Rosebery knew how to play to his audience. This was a dangerous metaphor because many Unionists had already made a connection between Home Rule and Rome which did not help the Liberal cause.

Throughout his Irish speeches runs an imperial strand. In 1888, he maintained that if Ireland's loyalty was granted,

> A large measure of Home Rule would produce reconciliation; and further that the demand of Home Rule in Ireland, when granted furnished a splendid opportunity for calling the colonies into

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[72] Rosebery, "Address to Glasgow Liberal Association," in The Times, April 28, 1887, p. 10.

[73] Rosebery, "Speech at Bolton," July 28, 1888, in The Times, July 30, p. 11.

cooperation with us and producing a united and federal Empire.[74]

Rosebery saw a close link between Irish harmony and imperial health. Given Ireland's loyalty, Rosebery viewed Home Rule as a glue to provide a closer union within the United Kingdom. The dream of Imperial Federation gave Rosebery another reason to support Home Rule. Rosebery's optimism seemed to be well founded. In 1889, Parnell was completely exonerated of any complicity in the Phoenix Park murders, after the celebrated letters in The Times proved to be poor forgeries. Parnell's popularity was at its apex.

Consequently, in August 1889, Rosebery suggested, "Has the time not now arrived, by the bye, when you might invite Parnell to Hawarden?" Yet, he warned, "I am not losing sight of the value of Irish co-operation: but for their sake and ours it should be no more, it should not be amalgamation."[75] Rosebery clearly recognised Gladstone as the leader of the party and Irish Home Rule as a cornerstone of its platform. Not surprisingly, Rosebery's connection with Irish Nationalism exposed him to the censure of the Unionist press. In 1889, when T. P. O'Connor and Rosebery shared the same platform in Edinburgh, The Scotsman lamented, "it is somewhat humiliating to see Lord Rosebery in co-partnership with Mr T. P. O'Connor, but still more to have to admit that the genuine nationalist made the more robust speech."[76] This is more an example of journalistic snobbery than a cogent political analysis: T. P. O'Connor was more popular and influential than Cooper, and Cooper knew it.

In 1890, prior to Hannah's death, Rosebery commented upon the

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[74] Rosebery, "Address to Leeds Liberal Association," October 9, 1888, in The Times, October 10, p. 10.

[75] GP, Add MS 44289, f. 92, Rosebery to Gladstone dated August 11, 1889.

[76] Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," February 19, 1889, in The Scotsman, February 20, p. 6.

position of Irish affairs in the Liberal agenda,

> In the great mass of the Liberal Party there is at this moment a prolific prevalence of programmes. Associations, constituencies, nay, nationalities are all fermenting with them. It is I think invariable to put the case of Ireland first. Some perhaps would make the measures contemplated for Ireland applicable to all the three kingdoms. But those are politicians who at least underrate the practical difficulties of parliamentary procedure ... The struggle for second place is keen. Scotland and Wales demand priority for particular measures. England with its twenty six millions, and more especially London with its vast political field rather scratched than ploughed by recent legislation, may possibly claim a not insignificant position.[77]

The Irish Question stimulated other nationalities in Britain to examine their own affairs. The potential for frustration (particularly at the hands of the Lords) was great,

> We sit planning the precedence and weighing the importance of our various reforms, like children playing on Vesuvius when the seismograph predicts an immediate eruption ... We are living under a tree so old and so decayed that while it may stand for many years, it may fall on us at any moment. We make no effort to prop it up or cut it down, and yet we know well that its ancient roots spread so far that it is impossible to say how far a catastrophe of wreck and ruin its upheaval may cause, even to structures apparently distant and secure.[78]

Gladstone pursued a different mission. In 1845, Gladstone wrote his wife, "Ireland, Ireland! that cloud in the west, that coming storm, the Minister of God's retribution upon cruel and inveterate and but half-atoned injustice! Ireland forces upon us these great social and great religious questions."[79] Forty seven years later that same cloud still loomed. Gladstone was again

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[77] Rosebery, "Reform of the House of Lords," in The Scottish Liberal: A Journal of Political and Social Progress, vol. 1, no. 1, Feb 7, 1890, p. 9.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Hammond, p. 51.

Prime Minister. He had two clear liabilities: he was 82 and even with the support of the Irish Nationalists, he could only muster a majority of 42. Edwards has described this last ministry as "a pyrotechnical journey down a cul-de-sac."[80] Undaunted, Gladstone introduced his second Home Rule Bill.

The stage was set for one last battle. In the longest session in the history of Parliament, Gladstone's performance was nothing less than astounding. At eighty three, it was possibly Gladstone's finest hour. As Hammond noted,

> No triumph of argument however brilliant or of oratory however magnificent could avert the certain destruction of the bill in the Lords. The whole of those proceedings were, it was well known, the prelude to prompt and contemptuous rejection.[81]

However, by this time Rosebery's optimism had been blunted. His wife died in 1890 taking away much of his desire to participate in party politics. Parnell's fall from power in 1890 and death in 1891 crushed the Irish National cause, by removing its most effective and unifying leader. Rosebery's optimism and enthusiasm gave way to pessimism and malaise.

Like Gladstone who visited Ireland only twice,[82] Rosebery had little first-hand knowledge of Ireland. In Autumn 1892, as Foreign Secretary, Rosebery visited Ireland for the first and only time. He spent his time in Dublin with Lord Crewe, the Irish Viceroy (his future son-in-law) and John Morley, Chief Secretary for Ireland. Morley recounted some details of this pleasant visit,

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[80] Owen Dudley Edwards, "The Naughty Nineties" unpublished lecture delivered to the Department of English at the University of Edinburgh, December 11, 1992.

[81] Hammond, p. 691.

[82] Gladstone visited southern Ireland for an extended holiday from October 17 to November 12, 1877 and visited Dublin for a day on August 29, 1880.

> We had long and serious talks about Irish and other politics, delightful as talks with him are wont to be even when you don't agree. ... The visit may possibly have made him feel that Ireland was by rights a curious subspecies in the Foreign Department with sincerity of gloom intensified by all he had seen and heard.... [later after dinner] "There is no brilliant hope for our policy," I confessed "No indeed" he said. At least it was extremely unlike Midlothian.[83]

Even before Gladstone introduced his second Home Rule Bill, it appears that Rosebery was not in full agreement with Morley (a co-author of the Bill). Rosebery saw Home Rule as a ball and chain which hindered the party. The romantic glow of Midlothian which first attracted Rosebery to national politics had greatly dimmed.

Rosebery's views on Ulster have largely been glossed over.[84] He did not often speak about Ulster, but his few utterances are significant. Essentially, Rosebery believed that despite vocal Unionist opposition, Ulster would ultimately cast its lot with the rest of Ireland. The status quo was untenable and partition seemed inconceivable. Rosebery never visited Ulster, and he had few, if any, connections with the province. In 1892, at Edinburgh, he dismissed the fears of Ulster and likened the province to "a spoiled child." Ulster's real fear, he maintained, "is that unnatural apprehension of the loss of their unnatural predominance which has been the curse of Ulster and the curse of Ireland."[85] This was hardly an appeal to Liberal Unionists to return to the Gladstonian fold. In 1894, when he elaborated on his Predominant Partner speech, Rosebery also maintained "Ulster plays an utterly disproportionate part in the discussion of this great question."[86] Rosebery's

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[83] Morley, Recollections, vol. i, p. 368. Undated by Morley [1892].

[84] Wallace noted briefly, Rosebery "has in the main ignored Ulster, and when he has not done that, he has dealt with her in a manner ungenerous and cavalier," in The Earl of Rosebery: His Words and His Works, p. 52.

[85] Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," June 20, 1892, in The Times, June 21, p. 10.

[86] Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," March 17, 1894, in The Times, March 19, p. 8.

observations, though largely accurate, did little to reassure or cajole Ulster Protestants. Also, Rosebery was in danger of losing support among the Presbyterian community in Scotland, particularly in the west, which had close spiritual, family and political ties with Ulster. Rosebery, like most Liberal politicians, underestimated the resolve of Ulstermen: they would and did indeed fight.[87]

Responding to a letter from the Queen on June 8, 1893,[88] Rosebery shared his jaundiced views on Home Rule. His apathy was striking.

> He is not an enthusiastic Home Ruler, in the sense of believing that it is a certain panacea for the secular ills of Ireland; nor would he pursue that remedy to the length of Civil War, for of course it would then be worse than the disease it is designed to cure. But he regards it as on the whole the most practicable - or the least impracticable method of governing that country, and, indeed, until it shall have been tried, he knows of no alternative; for he believes that were the hope of Home Rule to be removed the latent forces of anarchy and revolution would break out with renewed horror.
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> He considers therefore that the Government have no choice but to go on with their measure, to which they are pledged in honour, and which the majority of the House of Commons supports. It will no doubt be rejected by the House of Lords, and the result of that rejection remains to be seen. Lord Rosebery will utter no forecast with regard to it. But in the meantime, by the unwritten laws of politics, the bill must proceed through the House of Commons. There is indeed no choice in the matter.
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> Lord Rosebery deplores Your Majesty's misgivings and distress, the more so as he can fully enter into Your Majesty's point of view. But even should the Home Rule Bill be as full of danger as Your Majesty believes, Your Majesty can surely place sufficient confidence in the robust common sense and overwhelming power of Great Britain to be certain that the ultimate result cannot be disaster. Lord Rosebery's own prognostications are of course much more sanguine, though falling short of course of the hopes entertained by some of his colleagues. Indeed he is not sure that he does not consider the London

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[87] For a detailed study of Ulster's recalcitrance, see A. T. Q. Stewart, The Ulster Crisis: Resistance to Home Rule, 1912 - 1914 (Faber Paperback ed., London, 1979).

[88] RP, MS 10065, f. 1, Queen Victoria to Rosebery dated June 8, 1893.

> County Council a more portentous circumstance than an Irish local legislature.[89]

Gladstone continually stressed the moral imperative of Home Rule, whereas Rosebery was pragmatic and increasingly pessimistic. His frankness was admirable in one sense but it was also selfish and self-justifying. When the second Home Rule Bill passed its third reading in the Commons, Rosebery publicly supported this doomed measure. As he had written to the Queen, he had no alternative. On September 7, 1893, in a sarcastic, even flippant, speech, Rosebery addressed the opposition,

> You may be certain, in regard to this controversy, of the infallibility of the course you have pursued or propose to pursue. I may frankly say that I am by no means sure of mine. I am not certain about anything with regard to Ireland. (Opposition cheers) I was never more gratified than by those cheers. They show that there were some points, at least on which noble Lords opposite have not yet made up their minds definitely. They are not quite certain about Ireland. That is at least a ray of hope. I say that I am not certain about Ireland; but I can at least say this - that I have come to the conclusion at which I have arrived after a long and painful study - that I have arrived at the convictions which I hold in the teeth of all, or almost all, that would tend to make me take the other side.[90]

This certainly was not a rallying cry for the nation or for the party, but rather the last gasp of a weary and defeated government. His support appeared shallow,

> I speak as a witness, but not as an enthusiastic witness, in favour of Home Rule. With me, at any rate, if I may speak for one moment of myself, Home Rule is not a fanaticism, it is not a question of sentiment; it is scarcely even a question of history. It is not a counsel of perfection; but it is on the whole, the best of our courses to be pursued in dealing with a highly critical and complex subject. With me at any

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[89] RP, MS 10065, f. 124, Rosebery to the Queen [copy] dated June 9, 1893.

[90] Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 17, col. 386, September 7, 1893.

> rate, it is merely a question of policy politic, and as such alone, I argue it.[91]

This was far from a rallying cry. Rosebery realised the ridiculous nature of his position as he addressed opposition and crossbenches which were literally filled to capacity with Peers who were eager not simply to defeat Gladstone's bill, but to humiliate its author. However, Rosebery, the Foreign Secretary and the government's greatest speaker in the Lords, publicly admitted that he was not an enthusiastic supporter of Gladstone's primary piece of legislation. He still supported Home Rule despite his reservations.

In concluding his speech, Rosebery presented his true basis for supporting the bill and attempted to sketch - albeit primitively - a new future for the party and for the Empire,

> We claim that this bill is not a leap in the dark. We claim that it is a leap towards the light, a leap and a long stride towards a more generous Irish policy, towards the reconcilement of two great nations, too long connected and too long divided, and furthermore, a considerable stride towards the adjustment and devolution of local business which will alone enable the British people to support the vast and various burdens of their Empire.[92]

This was the most positive element of the speech and again he tried to present the Irish Question in an imperial context and to equate the demand for a Dublin Parliament with the broader and less threatening concept of devolution.

The reception in the House of Lords was remarkable only in terms of the number of peers who voted. The Lords threw out the product of 82

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[91] Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 17, col. 393, September 7, 1893.

[92] Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 17, col. 403, September 7, 1893.

sessions in the Commons by a vote of 419 to 40. In the same session, the Lords maimed the Parish Councils Bill and drastically amended the Employer's Liability Bill; a session's worth of measures had been destroyed or mutilated.

In March 1894, a few days after being invited to form a government, Rosebery delivered his 'Predominant Partner' speech (in response to a question from Salisbury),

> The Noble Marquis made one remark on the subject of Irish Home Rule with which I confess myself in entire accord. He said that before Irish Home Rule is conceded by the Imperial Parliament, England as the predominant member of the partnership of the three kingdoms, will have to be convinced of its justice. That may seem to be a considerable admission to make, because your Lordships will know that the majority of English members of Parliament elected from England proper are hostile to Home Rule. But I believe that the conviction of England in regard to Home Rule depends on one point alone and that is the conduct of Ireland herself ... I believe that the conversion of England will not be of a slow or difficult character.[93]

Given this startling revelation, it can be easy to pass over the rest of the speech. Rosebery still held out hope that Home Rule would pass, but he would not introduce another Home Rule measure. Immediately after this admission, he recapped his three-part Irish policy which still conformed to the Gladstonian model. First, he maintained that a measure of Home Rule was essential and addressing the Unionists he remarked, "your policy of palliatives is bound to fail." Secondly, the Liberal Irish policy was designed to secure the good of Ireland, the Empire and the great numbers of Irish overseas. Thirdly, Rosebery viewed Home Rule,

> From the highest Imperial grounds, because I believe that the maintenance of this Empire depends not on centralisation, but on

[93] Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 22, col. 32, March 12, 1894.

> decentralisation, and that if you once commence to tread this path, you will have to give satisfaction under the same conditions certainly to Scotland and possibly to Wales, not in the same degree or possibly in the same fashion, but so as to relieve this groaning Imperial Parliament from the burden of legislation under which it labours.[94]

Despite these assurances, the Irish response was predictable and sharp. Only through Morley's gentle handling did the government survive. This momentous speech requires some consideration as to whether it fully represents Rosebery's views. It was neither a summation of his views on Ireland nor a repudiation of Irish Home Rule. As Lyons noted, "the observation was in fact perfectly true, but it was unhappily phrased and unfortunately timed - essentially showing agreement between the Liberal Party and Lord Salisbury over Irish policy."[95]

A few weeks later on March 17 at Edinburgh, Rosebery tried to explain his predominant partner speech to the satisfaction of the Irish Party - John Dillon was in the audience. Rosebery again linked Ireland and the Empire, admitting that he did not approach the Irish Question "entirely on historical and what I will call sentimental grounds ... I approach it as an imperial question which concerns other populations as much as Ireland."[96] Gladstone never would have uttered these words, because to him sentimental, historical and moral considerations were at the heart of his Irish policy. Rosebery was reluctant to single her out for preferential treatment, whereas Gladstone believed that the unhappy history of Ireland merited special consideration.

The response from Ireland to Rosebery's accession was mixed but generally cautious. The New Ireland Review noted,

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[94] Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 22, col. 33, March 12, 1894.

[95] F. S. L. Lyons, The Irish Parliamentary Party 1890 -1910 (London, 1950), p. 48.

[96] Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," March 17, 1894, in The Times, March 19, p. 8.

> There is all the difference in the world between an opportunist of Lord Rosebery's type and a leader of Mr Gladstone's, at the head of such a movement as that in favour of Irish self-government ... He is not of the heroic temper of the statesmen who dare and accomplish the impossible. He will never, as Mr Gladstone did in 1886, call upon the future and force it to come to him.[97]

The response to Rosebery's premiership by the Irish leadership demonstrates the divisions of the post-Parnell period. The anti-Parnellites remained more or less sympathetic, even though they felt somewhat isolated from the new ministry.[98] They had not been informed about Gladstone's impending resignation and also, as William O'Brien noted, "none of us had ever met Lord Rosebery."[99] On the same day when Rosebery spoke in Edinburgh (St Patrick's Day), the party leaders made the following declarations. In Edinburgh, Dillon was strongest in his show of loyalty. He was convinced "that in Lord Rosebery the cause of Ireland had an honest and honourable champion." O'Brien, in Newcastle, did not think that Rosebery said what he meant. While Healy, reserved his judgement but expressed his suspicion, "There was no apostolic succession in politics .. in the case of Mr Gladstone he enjoyed the personal confidence of every man of them, Lord Rosebery had yet to give proof of the faith that was in him."[100] Rosebery inherited

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[97] "The New Premier and Ireland," in The New Ireland Review, vol. 1, May, 1894, p. 151.

[98] Unsupported by any other source, Healy (who was never considered infallible) claimed that Rosebery was cold if not hostile to the Irish Party. In March 1894, Justin MacCarthy, the leader of the anti-Parnellites wrote to Rosebery requesting an interview. Healy remarked, "Lord Rosebery would not even answer the letter written on behalf of the Irish Party by Mr MacCarthy, much less grant the interview it requested." Timothy M. Healy, Why Ireland is Not Free (Dublin, 1898), p. 92. Healy's accusation may be fallacious: after reviewing the Rosebery Papers, no such letter from MacCarthy (or a reply by Rosebery) is recorded nor is there any indication of displeasure from the anti-Parnellites.

[99] William O'Brien, An Olive Branch in Ireland and Its History (London, 1910), p. 75. O'Brien's meaning is somewhat unclear. T. P. O'Connor and Justin MacCarthy (who had the closest ties to the Liberal Party) most definitely had met Rosebery. Presumably O'Brien is referring to himself, Dillon, Sexton, and Healy.

[100] "St Patrick's Day Celebrations," March 17, 1894, in The Times, March 19, p. 5. In 1898, Healy noted in retrospect, that "acquiescence in the Rosebery policy brought about a marked decline in the influence of the Irish party." Healy, Why Ireland is Not Free, pp. 98 - 99.

Gladstone's office, but he did not replace the Grand Old Man.

The reaction of the Parnellites under the leadership of John Redmond was unequivocal.[101] In March 1894, they issued a manifesto which stated,

> In Lord Rosebery and his present Cabinet we can have no confidence and we warn our fellow countrymen to have none: they will concede just as much to Ireland as she extorts by organisation among her people and absolute unfettered independence of English parties in her representatives.[102]

Rosebery was seen as an opportunist whose interest in Ireland was variable. He did not reject improved Irish self-government nor did he sever the Liberal - Irish Alliance,[103] rather he questioned whether a Dublin Parliament was the best or only solution to the Irish Question.

In 1895, Rosebery's Government fell. He continued to move towards an Irish policy which he later summarised as a 'clean slate.' To Rosebery, a Dublin Parliament was not a pledge carved in stone.[104] Rosebery was eager to replace Gladstone's vision for the Liberal Party. In 1896 while still leader

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[101] Redmond's immediate reaction to Rosebery's predominant partner speech was an unmeasured denunciation. See Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 22, cols. 180 - 89, March 13, 1894.

[102] Denis Gwynn, Life of John Redmond (London, 1932), p. 84.

[103] Behind the scenes, Rosebery carefully maintained the allegiance of the anti-Parnellites through the intervention of John Morley. In early 1895, Justin MacCarthy wrote to Morley [RP, MS 10047, f. 58, MacCarthy to Morley dated January 23, 1895] anxious to know whether Irish Home Rule remained the first article of the Liberal Programme. Morley replied [RP, MS 10047, f. 69, Morley to MacCarthy [copy] dated January 26, 1895], "that Rosebery and Harcourt both desire me to assure you that they entirely adhere to that part of the agreement."

[104] After the 1895 General Election, Rosebery considered himself freed from the constraints of the Newcastle Programme, and his speeches concerned the Irish Nationalist leaders. After Rosebery spoke in Scarborough in October, 1895, Dillon remarked, "I am not satisfied, and ... no Irish Nationalist can be satisfied with the speech delivered at Scarborough the other day by the Earl of Rosebery, and I warn the Liberal Party and the leaders of the Liberal Party, that if this alliance between us and the Liberal Party is to be continued it can be continued only on the ground that they are faithful to the policy of Mr Gladstone." Healy, Why Ireland is Not Free, p. 126.

of the Liberal Party, he expressed his concerns quite frankly,

> I do not view the recent actions of the Irish parties in the same light as you do. They have no doubt by that action put an end to the state of things which has existed since 1886. This they had a perfect right to do. They have resumed their independence, and English and Scottish Liberals have resumed theirs. This is best for all concerned. It was impossible in the light of recent events that the Irish Question should remain where it was. The Irish have now full liberty of action, as regards the Tory Government, and the Liberals are free to examine the question afresh. With me as with many others, the question of Irish government has always been one of policy, of finding the most practicable and permanent solution, and I hope it may yet be possible to discover a system which may be acceptable to Ireland and the predominant partner.[105]

Irish affairs were not static. In 1896, Salisbury's Government introduced an Education Bill for England and Wales. English and Welsh Nonconformists strongly opposed this measure, but both T. P. O'Connor and John Dillon (who had just been elected as chairman of the anti-Parnellite Party) spoke in favour of the measure. The majority of the Irish Party voted with the Government.[106] This was seen as a clear betrayal of trust. Liberal Nonconformists had cast many votes in favour of Irish measures, but the Irish supported a measure offensive to the 'Nonconformist conscience' which had no bearing whatever on Ireland. The Methodist Times remarked that after Dillon sat down on May 12, "Gladstonian Home Rule uttered its last sigh and died."[107]

Rosebery accepted this view happily, but he angered many staunch Liberals who felt that Home Rule, like free trade, was a fixed part of the

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[105] RP, MS 10107, f. 160, Rosebery to an unnamed correspondent [copy] dated May 21, 1896.

[106] Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 40, cols. 1205 - 14 (O'Connor) and cols. 1216 - 24 (Dillon), May 12, 1896.

[107] The Methodist Times, May 21, 1896, quoted in the Annual Register 1896 (London, 1897), p. 116.

Liberal creed. In October 1896, Hamilton recorded Rosebery's views after he freed himself from the constraints of party leadership,

> The real fact was that he had been too tied to Gladstonian chains ever since he had taken a prominent part in politics. It commenced with the Midlothian Campaign: he had been bound to Mr G for the next 16 years; and then he was left with the thankless task of acting as Mr G's political executor and of winding up his political estate. He could stand it no longer; he wanted to start with a tabula rasa; and to put him in the position of doing this, he was bound to take a very drastic step.[108]

Rosebery's comments about Gladstone must be considered in the light of the events of their clash over Armenia which was discussed in chapter 3. More significant is his desire for a 'tabula rasa' or a clean slate, to do away with the Newcastle Programme. Hamer suggested that while Rosebery was trying to dispense with Gladstonian policies, his approach was very Gladstonian.[109] He tried to focus and concentrate the party's attention as Gladstone had done in 1876 with Bulgaria and in 1886 with Ireland. The Liberal Party was ever in danger of fragmentation and Rosebery - to his credit - attempted to forestall this disintegration. However, Rosebery tried to remove a pillar which was crucial to the integral structure of the Liberal Party.

In a heretofore unpublished memorandum, written only a few months after Gladstone's death, Rosebery detailed his position on the Irish Question,

> The Irish Question 28 July/98 Gastein
> 1. The Irish Question which has always been with us, entered on a new phase in consequence of the actions of Mr Gladstone in 1886, when he proclaimed himself a Home Ruler, & formed a government to carry that principle into effect.
> 2. The result was that he smashed the Liberal Party and reduced that

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[108] Bahlman (ed.), Hamilton's Diary, 1885 - 1906, p. 330, entry dated October 16, 1896.

[109] D. A. Hamer, Liberal Politics in the Age of Gladstone and Rosebery (Oxford, 1972), p. 249.

party which had been practically supreme since 1880 [1860?] with the exception of 11 years to a subordinate position.

3. Since Jan. 1886 two Home Rule bills were introduced by him.

The first was defeated at an early stage, & a General Election upon it pulverised the Liberal Party.

The second was introduced in 1893 at the beginning of a new Parliament when the Liberals combined with the Irish had a small majority. The bill was carried through the House of Commons, partly ~~perhaps~~ because it was known that the House of Lords would reject it. The House of Lords did so reject it. The country at least condoned ~~& approved~~ this action by ~~their~~ silence, & so greatly strengthened the position of the House of Lords.

4. That condonation assumed the character of approval at the election of 1895, when the Liberal Party sustained a crushing defeat.

It is true that the defeat cannot be put down solely to Home Rule. On the other hand it may be fairly surmised that the rejection of a great measure passed by their representatives & summarily rejected by the House of Lords would under ordinary circumstances have irritated the constituencies & stimulated them in favour of the party supporting the measure.

5. Since that election the alliance between the Liberal Party & the Irish party or parties. It has perished sub silentio, but nonetheless decisively.

6. There are many reasons for this:

a. The retirement and death of Mr Gladstone in whose power & in whose enthusiasm for their cause the Irish placed an unparalleled confidence.

b. The Irish have repeatedly declared that they are in alliance with no British party. As an alliance requires at least two parties to it, it is obvious that such a declaration ~~implies~~ records the termination of the alliance.

c. Various acts, votes, and speeches of the Irish Party have made it difficult for British members, especially Nonconformists to support them.

d. The demand of the Irish that if the Liberals obtain a majority they shall at once place Home Rule as the first measure on their programme.

7. The dissolution of the Liberal-Irish alliance frees both parties, and enables both parties to reconsider their position.

8. But the most important element in the situation has yet to be stated - the passing of the Irish Local Government Bill which has changed the whole aspect of the Irish Question.

9. That bill constitutes the edifice of Irish government from the base, instead of from the summit. It is a not less daring measure than the Home Rule Bills, and it has been passed by the practical unanimity of Parliament.

10. Under these circumstances it is obvious that this great experiment must be allowed time for development, & that it cannot soon or hastily be encumbered or overshadowed by an Irish Parliament or any analogous body.
11. The opposite would be analogous to that of a child who daily [pulls] up a plant to see if it is growing.
12. But more than that it may be said that British constituencies would not permit such a course. They have a perhaps unjust distrust of the competence of the Irish for self government, & of their loyalty to the Empire. They have brought themselves with difficulty to giving the Irish local government like their own, but this has not affected their repeatedly displayed aversion to ~~what is called~~ Parliamentary Home Rule. Indeed the concession may be said to have fortified the aversion, for it has made the opponents of Home Rule easy in their consciences.
13. If the foregoing statements of fact be accepted & they cannot be denied it follows that the Liberal Party must form a fresh Irish policy.
14. a. The first condition of this policy is complete independence of the Irish alliance.
(If it be alleged that the Liberals will not get a majority apart from the Irish my answer is that they are better in a minority. The country will never trust the Liberal Party until it is independent, and when it is independent the country will affirm its confidence with a majority)
b. The next condition is that it must accept the Irish Local Government ~~Bill~~ Act, give it a fair chance and be ready to supplement and revise it when experience shews this to be necessary.
c. It must bear in mind that the further questions relating to Irish government must be approached cautiously & tentatively. For it must be borne in mind that in this as in most other political problems vestigia nulla retrorsum[110] and that we have experiences which we had not in 1886 - in connection with Norway & the ~~other~~ nationalities of Austria which should redouble our vigilance in regard to the question of Irish government - More especially at a time when the condition of the world requires the closest concentration & economy of power in a state.
d. All this must not be held to imply the permanent exclusion of Home Rule in some form or another from the contemplation of Liberals, but it does imply perfect freedom of action, great caution in legislation & (growing at any rate & naturally out of the local gov't bill) a diametrically different method of approach.[111]

This document gives credence to the view that Rosebery did not, at first, see

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[110] Horace, "no traces behind."

[111] RP, MS 10177, ff. 118 - 121, Rosebery's private memorandum dated July 28, 1898.

his retirement as a final withdrawal from politics. Clearly, Rosebery was monitoring the political scene from his exile, paying close attention to Ireland.

Several points are worth noting. Point 14 (c), is very significant. The European examples (especially Norway/Sweden and Austria/Hungary) on which Gladstone partially based his Home Rule scheme were proving unworkable. Gladstone's August 1885 trip to Norway enabled him to observe two nations linked together by Home Rule.[112] However, the harmonious relations between Norway and Sweden broke down in the 1890s and by 1905 Norway was separated from Sweden.[113] With regard to Austria - Hungary, Rosebery did not see an example of successful Home Rule, but rather a dangerous precedent of parliamentary dualism which foreboded division and disunity rather than a closer union.[114] Thus, another plank supporting the platform of Gladstonian Home Rule was removed, and while the edifice appeared sound from the exterior, it was in danger of collapse.

In addition, the Irish Question had changed due to the actions of the Conservative government (points 8, 9, 10). The Irish Land Act of 1896 and more importantly the Irish Local Government Act of 1898 were landmarks in Irish legislation. Under the Local Government Act, which Rosebery rightly praised, county councils, urban district councils and rural district councils were established. Council members were elected triennially on a franchise

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[112] On September 8, 1885, Gladstone wrote Hartington, "I earnestly hope that our friends will give to the Irish case a really historical consideration ... The prolonged experience of Norway (I might perhaps mention Finland) and the altogether new experience of Austro-Hungary ... require the reconsideration of the whole position," quoted in Hammond, Gladstone and the Irish Nation, pp. 405 - 406.

[113] David Gutzke, "Rosebery & Ireland, 1896 - 1903: A Reappraisal," in O'Day (ed.), Reactions to Irish Nationalism, 1865 - 1914 (Dublin, 1987), p. 290.

[114] In 1888, Rosebery remarked, "Austria Hungary is not a federation, but a dualism, a union of two states." Speech of the Earl of Rosebery, President of the Imperial Federation League, October 31, 1888, p. 5. Rosebery was not unique in viewing Austria/Hungary in this light. From a completely different perspective, Arthur Griffith saw the same precedent. See Arthur Griffith, The Resurrection of Hungary: A Parallel for Ireland with Appendices on Pitt's Policy and Sinn Fein (3rd. ed., Dublin, 1918 [first published in 1904]).

which included women and Peers.[115] Lyons noted that "the effect of these reforms was to establish for the first time in Ireland a complete system of local government on a democratic basis, in place of government by the grand juries which had always in great measure been the preserve of the landlord."[116] The act was opposed by Davitt(**) and Dillon, but after it was shortly in operation, "it became clear that it was one of the most beneficial pieces of legislation ever passed for Ireland by an English ministry."[117]

Nonetheless, Home Rule refused to die. In the first local council elections in 1899, Nationalists secured 551 places to the Unionists 125 (86 of which were in Ulster).[118] A. V. Dicey writing to his fellow Unionist W. E. H. Lecky spoke of the "delusion that Irish Home Rulers will accept local government in the place of Home Rule instead of using it as a means for obtaining Home Rule."[119] Ireland gladly accepted all measures of goodwill from the Conservative Government but the demand for a Dublin Parliament remained. However, from his memorandum, Rosebery was satisfied at least temporarily with this measure for Ireland. There was one crucial element missing from this memorandum - a consideration of the desires and expectations of the Irish people. Rosebery accepted the Local Government Act as a viable solution to the Irish Question, but the Irish people did not.

Point 6 gives Rosebery's basis for justifying a change in the party's Irish policy. Both the Irish Question and the Irish leadership had changed. After 1890, though officially divided into two parties the Irish Party had at

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[115] Lyons, The Irish Parliamentary Party 1890 - 1910, p. 67.

[116] Ibid, p. 68.

[117] Ibid.

[118] Catherine B. Shannon, "The Ulster Liberal Unionists and Local Government Reform, 1885 - 1898," in Alan O'Day (ed.), Reactions to Irish Nationalism, 1865 - 1914 (Dublin, 1987), p. 363.

[119] Dicey to Lecky dated March 21, 1898, in Andrew Gailey, Ireland and the Death of Kindness: The Experience of Constructive Unionism 1890 - 1905 (Cork, 1987), p. 48.

least seven major leaders: John Redmond, John Dillon, Justin MacCarthy, Tim Healy, William O'Brien, Thomas Sexton(**) and T. P. O'Connor. More importantly point 12 suggests that Rosbery is beginning to question whether the Irish can be trusted with self-government. This apprehension grew and deepened. The divisions in the Irish Party and the actions and speeches of their leaders soured Rosebery even more towards the idea of a Dublin Parliament. Trust was an essential element of Gladstone's Home Rule scheme and Rosebery could no longer trust the Irish. Parnell's death caused a breach in Irish politics and society which continued for decades. Emotions ran high.[120] The Irish Party split into two parts but within the larger anti-Parnellite Party, Healy, O'Brien and Dillon each had their own faction. Lucy commented accurately in 1896, "It becomes increasingly difficult for one with the minutest information and the most tenacious memory to know exactly who is who and what's what in the Irish National Party."[121] Parnell gave his party coherence and unity.[122] More importantly, Rosebery respected Parnell, but there is no evidence that he respected the post-Parnell leadership (though he was on friendly terms with Justin MacCarthy and T. P. O'Connor).

Also the outbursts of even the most reliable and moderate nationalist leaders gave Rosebery and other Liberals cause for concern. Considering Rosebery's sensitive nature, possibly he still harboured resentment toward the

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[120] On November 3, 1891, after delivering a cutting speech on the late Parnell and Mrs Parnell, Healy was publicly horsewhipped.

[121] Henry W. Lucy, A Diary of The Unionist Parliament 1895 - 1900 (London, 1901), p. 96, entry dated July 23, 1896. On page 92, Lucy illustrated the antics of the Irish leaders, "When John Dillon stands up to attack the common enemy, John Redmond incontinently heaves half a brick at him. When the two come to close quarters, Tim Healy, shillalah in hand, drops in on the scene, trips one up, brings down his shillalah with a resounding thud on the skull of the other, and as he turns to leave has a bucket of water thrown over him by Dr Tanner."

[122] For the definitive study of Parnell as a party leader see Conor Cruise O'Brien, Parnell and His Party, 1880 - 1890 (Oxford, 1964).

Irish for blocking his Cromwell statue in 1895.[123] The support of prominent Irish leaders for the Boers during the interminable South African War was reprehensible to Rosebery.[124] Boer victories were cheered and British heroes were castigated.[125] As Rosebery later noted at Liverpool on February 14, 1902,

> Throughout this war in which we have been engaged in South Africa, the sympathy of the Irish leaders has been given openly and avowedly to our enemies in the field. If Ireland were loyal, I would gladly give her the privileges of the self governing colonies.[126]

This echoes his 1885 Paisley address almost exactly. Trust had gone from the relationship. The Nationalist leadership, in Rosebery's view, were neither loyal nor trustworthy.

In addition to the behaviour of the Irish leaders, Rosebery was even more concerned about their demands. In 1898 and 1899, John Redmond moved an amendment to the Queen's Address requesting an independent Irish Parliament - rather than a subordinate Parliament.[127] Redmond spoke

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[123] Rosebery spoke at the Cromwell Tercentenary on November 14, 1899, "To our Irish friends I may say that as we do not interfere with the statues which they choose to put up in Dublin, they might refrain from interfering with the statues which we choose to put up in London," in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, p. 80. After the Irish blocked parliamentary funding for the statue, Rosebery himself paid for the statue of the Lord Protector which now adorns the Palace of Westminster.

[124] See Michael Davitt, The Boer Fight for Freedom (New York, 1902).

[125] On July 31, 1901, Dillon "accused Lord Roberts of conducting the war with systematised inhumanity, of committing repeated and gross violations of recognised rules, of deceiving parliament and the people." While on June 5, 1902, Redmond noted "Lord Kitchener [Rosebery's personal friend] will go down to history as the general who made war on women and children," quoted in Lucy, The Balfourian Parliament, pp. 106 and 168.

[126] Rosebery, "Speech at Liverpool," February 14, 1902, in The Times, February 15, p. 9.

[127] For Redmond's 1898 declaration see Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 53, cols. 371 - 82, February 11, 1898. In 1899, he moved a similar amendment, "We humbly assure Your Majesty that the establishment of popular self government in local affairs in Ireland has intensified the demand of the people of that country for legislative independence, without which Ireland can never be prosperous or contented." Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 66, col. 1178, February 16, 1899. Dillon, though present, abstained from voting on this amendment.

for the small Parnellite minority but in 1898, Dillon voted for Redmond's amendments despite his own misgivings.[128] This was Rosebery's greatest fear: concession to Ireland would lead to independence rather than a closer union. Rosebery doubted the integrity of the Irish themselves. As Gutzke concluded,

> Rosebery's Irish policy originated in part from W. E. Gladstone's endeavour to place Ireland in a European context, and in part from Redmond's demand for what Liberals could not contemplate, an independent Parliament ... Yet whereas opposition to an independent Parliament could be reconciled with Liberalism, Rosebery's emphasis on Irish disloyalty contradicted a basic Liberal assumption upon which Home Rule was predicated.[129]

The actions and demands of the Irish leaders led Rosebery to question and eventually oppose Gladstonian Home Rule.

Rosebery's later political career presents a challenge to historians. His speeches in 1901 and 1902 are generally dismissed as purely negative and opportunistic, but Gutzke convincingly argues, that his subtlety is mistaken for opportunism, "For Rosebery while revealing pronounced scepticism about the expediency of Home Rule, did not repudiate this policy."[130] However, the demands for an independent parliament fuelled his fears and made him reluctant to concede any measure of Home Rule. His reading of Parnell's biography no doubt added to this fear. Barry O'Brien noted in one of his last conversations with Parnell, "Every Irish Nationalist would go for separation

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[128] Dillon focused on Redmond's use of the word 'independent.' Dillon quoted Parnell in 1886 who had asserted that the Irish people knew "the difference between a co-ordinate and a sub-ordinate Parliament, and we have recognised that the legislature which the Prime Minister [Gladstone] proposes to constitute is a subordinate Parliament - that is not the same as Grattan's Parliament, which was co-equal with the Imperial Parliament." Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 53, col. 390, February 11, 1898.

[129] Gutzke, "Rosebery & Ireland, 1896 - 1903," p. 295.

[130] Ibid, p. 285.

if he thought he could get it; we are all Home Rulers because we do not believe separation is possible" to which Parnell responded "I have never gone for separation. I never said I would." To those who favoured violence, Parnell made his position clear, "I would be satisfied with a Parliament; and that I believe in our constitutional movement."[131] Parnell was gone and the pronouncements of his successors seemed ominous.

For example, Barry O'Brien made a distinction to which Rosebery could not assent. Concerning the English electors, O'Brien asked Parnell, "do they really know the difference between Home Rule and local government? I doubt it."[132] This point clearly divided Rosebery from the Irish Nationalists because from his 1898 memorandum and his earlier speeches, Rosebery did not distinguish Home Rule from local government. In 1888, Rosebery clearly maintained,

> You must remember that local government and Home Rule are substantially the same thing. They are not the same thing in extent or in degree, but they are the same thing in principle. They represent the principle antagonistic to centralisation.[133]

Irish leaders accepted increased local government and any other beneficial legislation, but they refused to consider these measures as an alternative to Home Rule.

In 1900, the Irish Nationalist Party was reunited under the leadership of John Redmond who reasserted his commitment to Gladstonian Home Rule and a complete independence from all British parties. For the first time since 1890, the party had a semblance of unity. Yet, to Rosebery, it was unity

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[131] Barry O'Brien, Life of Parnell, vol. ii, p. 336.

[132] Ibid, vol. ii, p. 339.

[133] Rosebery, "Speech at Bolton," July 28, 1888, in The Times, July 30, p. 11.

under the leadership of a man who had demanded an independent Irish Parliament in the two preceding years. Healy - the most divisive of the major leaders - remained outside of this new union. After the 1900 General Election, Healy noted, "The hon. member for Cork (William O'Brien) has created two united Irish parties of which I am one."[134]

Gutzke traces Rosebery's final hardening against Home Rule to his meeting with Campbell-Bannerman in December 1901 after Rosebery's triumphant Chesterfield address. Rosebery noted in a private memorandum,

> He [C.B.] began talking about substantial agreement &c and I somehow fell at once into Irish Home Rule and stated definitely that I could have nothing further to do with Mr Gladstone's policy, that much had happened since 1892 including the Irish Local Government Bill and my own experience at the F.O. What I had seen of the working of the Austro-Hungarian and Swedish-Norwegian systems had made me feel that I could never be a party to introducing anything of the kind in Great Britain.[135]

In Rosebery's mind such a system would lead to parliamentary dualism at best and Irish independence at worst. Both contingencies were directly at odds with his views on imperial harmony. The details of their private conversation became known and Rosebery was incensed at what he saw as a betrayal of trust, and his "personal antipathy was transformed into a public repudiation of Home Rule."[136]

From this point forward, Rosebery equated the Irish demand for Home Rule with separation. In his Liverpool address of February 1902, Rosebery asserted, "The Irish leaders have at last played their full hand. They have

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[134] Lyons, The Irish Parliamentary Party 1890 -1910, p. 98. By the end of 1901, Healy had been expelled from the party.

[135] Rosebery's memorandum dated December 23, 1901, quoted in Crewe, vol. ii, p. 573.

[136] Gutzke, "Rosebery & Ireland, 1896 - 1903," pp. 288 - 9.

demanded, not what Mr Gladstone was willing to give them, but an independent Parliament in Dublin ... I am not prepared at any time or under any circumstances, to grant an independent Parliament in Dublin."[137] Despite Redmond's assurance in March 1902 that the sole aspiration of the Irish was Home Rule,[138] Rosebery never again supported Gladstonian Home Rule. According to Macready, Rosebery "found Home Rule a convenient stick with which to beat his anti-Imperialist opponents within the party ranks."[139] Rosebery went beyond the Liberal-Imperialist line (i.e. the position of Asquith) that Home Rule had to wait - he demanded its rejection.

In addressing the newly-formed Liberal League in Glasgow, Rosebery objected to the vehement language used by Irish Nationalists,

> It has an influence on the predominant partner, on the people of England, Scotland and Wales, which makes it absolutely hopeless for any leader - were Mr Gladstone to rise from the dead - to try to persuade them to entrust to leaders who use such language the control of an independent Parliament of their own in Dublin.[140]

He was trying to restore the Liberal Party to be a British party rather than an Irish party. With regard to Irish Home Rule,

> I will support nothing - will vote for nothing - in the shape of an independent Parliament in Dublin, or anything that will lead towards it. I am absolutely convinced that Mr Gladstone would have said the same thing [but, he] would have found it more easy to persuade himself that he could place a Parliament in Dublin which should not aim at leading up to an independent Parliament than I could find

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[137] Rosebery, "Speech at Liverpool," February 14, 1902, in The Times, February 15, p. 9.

[138] Gutzke, "Rosebery & Ireland, 1896 - 1903," pp. 292 - 3.

[139] H. W. Macready, "Home Rule and the Liberal Party, 1899 - 1906," Irish Historical Studies, vol. xiii (1962 - 3), p. 323.

[140] Rosebery, "Speech at Glasgow," March 10, 1902, in The Times, March 11, p. 11.

it.[141]

Rosebery implied that while he saw the Irish situation clearly, Gladstone was prone to self-delusion. In Rosebery's view, the Liberal Party could not endorse any plan which threatened to split the kingdom. Rosebery seemed to have a destination - the unity of the Empire, but he was drifting rudderlessly without charts or instruments, forever colliding with the Hibernian barrier. On the eve of the 1905 General Election, Rosebery severed all ties with the party after Campbell-Bannerman advocated a 'step-by-step' approach to Irish Home Rule at his speech at Stirling. On December 4, in response to a demand by Rosebery for clarification, Campbell-Bannerman curtly replied,

> Will you please tell Lord Rosebery that within two hours from now I expect to have accepted the King's Commission to form a government, and that being so, I can obviously say no more about the Irish Question until I have had an opportunity of consulting my colleagues.[142]

For the first time since 1880, a Liberal Cabinet was formed without Rosebery. He was marginalised. As Rosebery warned the Duke of Argyll in 1885,

> "You should forget party" says the Duke of Argyll ... The Duke of Argyll cannot forget his party, because his party is himself ... There is a reciprocal danger in that piece of advice, which is that if you forget your party too long your party may forget you.[143]

The Liberal Party had forgotten Rosebery.

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[141] Ibid, p. 11.

[142] Campbell-Bannerman's conversation with Spender, December 4, 1901, in Rhodes James, p. 458.

[143] Rosebery, "Address to the Glasgow Liberal Association," April 27, 1887, in The Times, April 28, p. 10.

After 1905, Rosebery's views on Irish Home Rule hardened further. In December 1907, he wrote to Hartington, now the Duke of Devonshire,

> The main attack on the government, when Parliament meets will be with reference to Ireland. It is the old story that always repeats itself: the Liberals when they come into power always begin with the honeypot and end by coercion: the Tories when they come in begin with coercion and soon stretch out a stealthy hand to the honeypot. I have long come to believe that the spirit of Blarney pervades the very atmosphere of Ireland.[144]

A few months later, he wrote on Ireland as a whole,

> We have had an Irish debate in our House which did not greatly impress me, but which strengthened my abiding impression that there is something about Ireland which only an Irishman understands. I believe all Irishmen outside Ulster would be happier if they lived in a permanent & universal Donnybrook fair.[145]

In the Lords, Rosebery was indefatigable in his opposition to the government. In August 1907, his denunciation of the Scottish Small Landholder's Bill was reprinted by the West of Scotland Liberal Unionist Association! On Liberal policy, he commented, "The instalment system in Ireland has worked in this way - the government have proffered a loaf to Ireland, and they have received a stone, hurled with some violence and precision in return."[146] Rosebery concluded his polemics by pledging, "I will not be a party in any way, direct or indirect, to the introduction into the healthy body politic of Scotland of the poisonous bacillus of the Irish agrarian system."[147]

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[144] Devonshire MSS, Ms 340.3310, Rosebery to Devonshire dated December 29, 1907.

[145] Devonshire MSS, Ms 340.3318, Rosebery to Devonshire dated February 1, 1908.

[146] Lord Rosebery on the Scottish Small Landholders Bill, reprinted by the West of Scotland Liberal Unionist Association (Glasgow, 1907), p. 9. His original speech is in Hansard, 4th. ser., vol. 180, cols. 979 - 997, August 13, 1907.

[147] Rosebery on Scottish Small Landholders Bill, p. 15.

The events of 1916 and after did little to induce Rosebery to change his view on Ireland. Rosebery was an old man embittered by decades of exile and ill-health. In a letter to his sister in 1921, he noted caustically,

> I should have thought that every rational being would after the proceedings in the Irish legislature[148] (whatever it is called) have come to the conclusion once for all, even from that alone, that they were hopelessly incapable of self-government.[149]

To his son Neil's former tutor, Rosebery lamented in 1922,

> Here we are in the degraded but I suppose necessary position of having to negotiate with the rebels and assassins in Ireland. It is rather humiliating to read in newspapers of the poignant anxiety felt for the reception of the reply of this gang to our government. But I suppose that the whole affair may be safely put down as an odious necessity.[150]

To conclude, Rosebery approached Ireland from a detached and pragmatic standpoint, with regrettable results. Placating the Irish people was never a passion for Rosebery. He shared in the mistake noted by Lord Birkenhead in 1921,

> We have all along made one error in our treatment of Ireland. We have paid far too much attention to those things which are merely material, and have paid too little attention to those things which are idealistic and sentimental.[151]

This was a reiteration of Lecky's earlier warning,

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[148] i.e. Dail Eireann.

[149] Petworth MSS, PHA 5583, f. 35, Rosebery to Lady Leconfield dated December 22, 1921.

[150] Fisher MSS, MS 57, f. 99, Rosebery to Fisher dated October 11, 1922.

[151] Birkenhead, "Speech at Birmingham," December 6, 1921, quoted in Viscount Gladstone, After Thirty Years (London, 1928), p. 291.

> "In no other history especially can we investigate more fully the evil consequences which must ensue from disregarding that sentiment of nationality which whether it be wise or foolish, whether it be desirable or the reverse is at least one of the strongest and most enduring of passions."[152]

Gladstone tried to understand and conciliate the Irish people, and he was probably closer than anyone to solving the Irish Question. Ireland was never Rosebery's focal point, and his efforts to redefine or postpone the Irish Question met with disaster.

By contrast, a somewhat coherent picture emerges concerning Rosebery's overall policy toward devolution. While his support for Home Rule (which implied a Dublin Parliament) waned and then sharply soured, Rosebery never wavered from supporting increased devolution or decentralisation. Chamberlain tried to transform Home Rule into a central board scheme while Rosebery attempted to view Home Rule as simply increased local government. He consistently advocated increased Irish county and local government, but he repudiated Irish Home Rule because he feared that it would threaten the integrity of the Empire by dividing power rather than devolving power. Measures such as the Local Government Act of 1898 had beneficial results, but they did not displace nor placate Irish demands for a Home Rule Parliament as Rosebery had hoped.

Parnell and Rosebery

> Parnell was the most remarkable man I ever met. I do not say the ablest man, I say the most remarkable and the most interesting. He was an intellectual phenomenon. He was unlike anyone I had ever

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[152] Quoted in O'Brien, "Unionist Case for Home Rule" in Bryce (ed.), Handbook of Home Rule, p. 160.

> met.[153]
> Gladstone, 1897.

> It has been said that a general can make an army, but that an army cannot make a general. Parnell made the most formidable Parliamentary army, pledged, bound, and united, that Ireland ever sent to the House of Commons. He consolidated the nation. He brought English parties and English statesmen to their bearings. He revolutionised the House of Commons. He left nothing as he found it ... Whatever progress the cause of Irish Nationality has made among Englishmen is due to the genius of Charles Stewart Parnell.
> John Redmond, 1911[154]

The relationship between Rosebery and Parnell merits further attention because they stood apart clearly as spokesmen for Scotland and Ireland respectively. Their political and personal association is obscure. No letters between the two men survive which is not surprising given the fact that Parnell was not a prolific letter writer, and they had not met until 1889.

Prior to 1886, Rosebery and Parnell were opponents, though Rosebery did express publicly his admiration for Parnell's resoluteness, "He has a great force of will; he has a striking power of condensed and significant speech; and above all, he knows what he wants."[155] At the 1885 General Election, Rosebery was delighted when Parnell advised his followers to vote for the Tory Party in Britain. He remarked to Gladstone, "It frees our hands to do what we think right without being misled by the will o' the wisp idea of satisfying the Irish Party."[156] Gladstone replied,

It would be a great relief indeed, if with you I could feel pleasure at

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[153] O'Brien, Life of Parnell, vol. ii, p. 357, O'Brien's interview with Gladstone on January 28, 1897.

[154] R. Barry O'Brien, The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell, 1846 - 1891 [with a preface by John E. Redmond, M.P.] (Nelson 1 vol. ed., London, 1911), pp. v - vi.

[155] Rosebery "Speech at Paisley," October 15, 1885, in The Times, October 16, p. 10.

[156] GP, Add MS 44288, f. 240, Rosebery to Gladstone dated September 8, 1885.

> Parnell's recent declarations. I seem to be rather like the juror, who sat with eleven most obstinate men, that he could not convince of the truths he himself saw. ... What I do think of is the Irish nation, and the fame, duty, & peace of my country. Some of you, to speak freely and without this why speak at all - seem to me not to have taken any just measure of the probable position of a serious dispute with the Irish nation.[157]

This extract highlights Gladstone's concern for the Irish people and the just demands - both legislative and sentimental - of the Irish nation. Gladstone recognises that his concern in this regard was unusual - it proved to be a dividing line between himself and Rosebery.

During the months of intrigue surrounding the flying of the Hawarden Kite in December 1885, Rosebery was actively involved in the intricate web of negotiation and machination between the Liberal, Conservative and Nationalist parties. Rosebery apprised Gladstone of his views in a confidential letter dated December 11, 1885,

> Our weak point is, who can we trust? Healy shews reasons why we should trust Parnell, but they simply come to this, "Shew us your hand, it will be all for your good." I think I understand and appreciate Parnell's position so fully that I cannot believe in its allowing him to be trustworthy. He is <u>bound</u> to pursue his object without scruple. He has hitherto done so, & must continue to do so. He is <u>bound</u> therefore to say to the other side, "we are offered so & so, what do you bid."[158]

Rosebery did not condemn Parnell or his underhanded methods, but he understood that his position dictated his actions and the Parnell was a man with whom to be reckoned. Rosebery's interest and even fascination with Parnell continued to grow.

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[157] RP, MS 10023, f. 90, Gladstone to Rosebery dated September 10, 1885.

[158] GP, Add MS 44288, f. 276, Rosebery to Gladstone dated December 11, 1885.

Their first and probably only meeting occurred at the famous Eighty Club dinner on March 8, 1889.[159] Spencer, Rosebery and Parnell each gave addresses. After Parnell spoke, T. P. O'Connor recounted vividly, he,

> Began to sit down, but, looking round at his immediate neighbours, he saw Lord Spencer. The thought transferred itself from one to the other, and stretching across Lord Rosebery and the Chairman,[160] the 'Red Earl' and the 'Uncrowned King' shook hands. It was the shaking of hands between two nations, burying the historic animosities of England, the last consecrating touch to these life-long efforts, sometimes only partial in their effect, but always sincere in their intention, by which Mr Gladstone had sought to pacify Ireland and consolidate the Empire.[161]

In his brief speech following this momentous handshake Rosebery noted, "This is a national occasion which will long be remembered in the political annals of this country and of Ireland." He continued,

> I venture to say a more striking incident was never witnessed at this Club than was seen here this evening when Lord Spencer and Mr Parnell shook hands. There was nothing in itself remarkable in that. They had shaken hands politically before, but it was an outward and visible sign of that inward grace which is uniting England and Scotland and Wales and Ireland. And we who saw that grasp could not see it without emotion, for it was the grasp not of Lord Spencer and Mr Parnell, but it was the hand shaking of two nations across St. George's channel; it was the burying of the historic animosities of England and Ireland.[162]

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[159] Naylor, p. 215. Parnell was the surprise guest of Sir Charles Russell who had exposed Pigott as the forger of The Times letters.

[160] Sir Francis (Frank) Lockwood (1847 - 97) was a Liberal MP for York (1885 - 97) and was knighted in 1894. He was a QC and served as Solicitor General (1894 - 95), presenting the Crown's case against Oscar Wilde. He was also a caricaturist whose work often appeared in Punch.

[161] T. P. O'Connor, Memoirs of an Old Parliamentarian (2 vols., London, 1929), vol. ii, pp. 183 - 4.

[162] Eighty Club, The Irish Question: Speeches by the Right Hon. Earl Spencer K.G., Charles Stewart Parnell, M.P. and Right Hon. Earl of Rosebery on Friday March 8, 1889 (London, 1890), p. 33.

This is a good summary of Rosebery's optimism about Ireland, prior to Parnell's fall and Hannah's death.

One further element which commended Parnell to Rosebery was Parnell's soundness on the Empire. No records survive, but it is certain that Rosebery, a close friend of Cecil Rhodes, was aware of the overtures which Rhodes made to Parnell. In 1888 Rhodes sent Parnell £10,000 (£500,000 today) and explained, "I was interested in the Home Rule movement because I believed that Irish Home Rule would lead to Imperial Home Rule."[163] Rhodes was eager to see Irish Home Rule as a viable model for Imperial Federation. It was essential therefore was that Irish MPs were retained at Westminster. Rhodes envisioned allowing all colonies who contributed to the Imperial Revenue to send representatives to a truly Imperial Parliament. Parnell's response, apart from accepting the money, was typically non-committal, though positive, "I cordially agree with your opinion that there should be effective safeguards for the maintenance of imperial unity," but he declined to express his views on the larger question of Imperial Federation.[164] This interchange convinced Rhodes - and presumably Rosebery - that Parnell was sound on the Empire.[165]

Considering their cordial first meeting, it is somewhat surprising that Rosebery did not take a prominent part in presenting Parnell with the

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[163] O'Brien, Life of Parnell, vol. ii, p. 185.

[164] O'Brien, Life of Parnell, vol. ii, p. 185, Charles Stewart Parnell to Cecil Rhodes dated June 23, 1888. For a fuller discussion of this incident see O'Brien, Life of Parnell, vol. ii, pp. 184 - 89.

[165] This episode raises the challenge of assessing Rosebery's relationship with Rhodes which by all accounts [including his own, "Cecil Rhodes," Oxford, 1907, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, pp. 30 - 35] was very close. However, very little of their correspondence survives. The Rosebery Papers [RP, MS 10175, ff. 188 - 208] contain a few minor letters from Rhodes over the period 1892 - 1901. However, Rosebery's outgoing letters [e.g. RP, MS 10130, p. 8, Rosebery to Rhodes dated March 27, 1894 [copy], and RP, MS 10131, f. 22 , Rosebery to Rhodes dated August 26, 1895 [copy]] indicate that Rhodes wrote frequent and extensive letters to Rosebery on Imperial and domestic affairs. These letters have either been lost or destroyed.

freedom of Edinburgh on July 20, 1889. One explanation is that Rosebery did not want to make this event bigger than it already was. Parnell was in Rosebery's backyard. Edinburgh was the first British city to confer such an honour on Parnell. Rosebery sent a letter of congratulations and regret for his absence, but it was Elgin who represented the Scottish Liberal Association at the ceremony.[166] Directly on the heels of the Parnell Commission, the Edinburgh Town Council was sharply divided over naming Parnell as a Freeman of the City.[167] The Lord Provost[168] dissented and refused to have anything to do with the ceremony. Even more, Unionists in Edinburgh, egged on by Cooper, formed a private committee to seek the views of the electors throughout the city. They claimed victory after receiving over 17,000 'no' responses from the 42,000 registered electors.[169] In light of this sharp and acrimonious division, Rosebery may very well have considered it best to absent himself. Of course, Rosebery may have known about Parnell's adulterous affair - which was not well hidden - and allowed discretion to form the better part of valour. As it turned out, the Unionists were vindicated. After the divorce scandal Parnell's name was erased from the roll of honorary burgesses.[170]

Just prior to Parnell's fall in 1890, Rosebery met with Gladstone to discuss Parnell and the upcoming Midlothian Campaign,

> Talked about his Scottish campaign in the autumn & said I thought of asking Harcourt, Morley & Spencer & some of those who have been

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[166] For a full account of the proceedings, see The Scotsman, July 22, 1889, pp. 7 - 9.

[167] The council was divided 24 to 16. The motion in favour of Parnell was moved by Bailie John Walcot, the President of the United Liberal Club of Edinburgh. Scotland's Welcome to Mr Parnell: A Souvenir of his First Political Visit to Scotland (Edinburgh, 1889), p. 29.

[168] Sir John Boyd of Maxpoffle, K.T. (1826 - 93), was Lord Provost of Edinburgh (1888 - 91).

[169] Scotland's Welcome to Mr Parnell, pp. 30 - 32.

[170] Sir Thomas B. Whitson, The Lord Provosts of Edinburgh, 1296 - 1932 (Edinburgh, 1932), p. 141.

> used to attend his great meetings & possibly Parnell. We might utilize this opportunity for conferences. He said Parnell was the best man with whom he had to do political business, so alive to the bearing of things.[171]

Intervening events of course made such a joint effort impossible.

The events surrounding Parnell's death must have struck Rosebery greatly. In an instant the darling of the Irish people had fallen. The landed aristocrat who had run ahead of the mob was now being chased by the mob. He was torn to pieces by the people who had once hung on his every word. Browning captured the fickle adulation of the crowd in "The Patriot" (1855),

> It was roses, roses, all the way,
> With myrtle mixed in my path like mad:
> The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
> The Church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
> A year ago, on this very day.

The passage of a year, however, had great implications. The great patriot had fallen,

> I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
> A rope cuts both my wrists behind;
> And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
> For they fling, whoever has a mind,
> Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.[172]

As Wilde's plays and life demonstrated, the Victorian Age maintained a veneer of respectability in which a moral lapse could not be repented.

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[171] RP, MS 10176, f. 206, Rosebery's memorandum dated July 7, 1890.

[172] Robert Browning, The Works of Robert Browning (10 vols., London, 1912), vol. iii, pp. 263 - 4.

In one sense, Rosebery was another casualty of the Parnell split. Ensor identified four rising young men of the early 1880s,

> "C. S. Parnell ([born] 1846), Lord Rosebery (1847), A. J. Balfour (1848) and Lord Randolph Churchill (1849) - were all scions of the landowning oligarchy which had ruled Great Britain and Ireland for two centuries. And subject to personal differences there was not one of them but illustrated typically the strength and weaknesses of the aristocratic temperament. ... One might style this brilliant band the last of the patricians."[173]

By the end of 1891, Parnell was dead, Churchill was a half-sane political pariah, and Rosebery was in a self-imposed exile. Time had not been kind. Optimism had faded and youthful vigour had departed.

After Parnell's death, Rosebery continued to retain a keen interest in all things related to Parnell. During his one trip to Ireland, Rosebery made a pilgrimage to Parnell's flower-covered grave at Glasnevin.[174] This is a perfect example of Rosebery's flair for the romantic - paying his sincere respects to Ireland's fallen king. However, as Foreign Secretary, this action was incredible. His homage appears genuine rather than feigned because it is at odds with all political parties with the exception of Redmond's Parnellite remnant. The attraction to Parnell persisted even after Rosebery departed from the political arena. In 1898, upon receiving Barry O'Brien's Life of Parnell, he devoured the volumes,

> I have been imbedded in the Life of Parnell. I read most of the second volume the day I got it, and on Thursday [the] rest continually in an eight hours sitting. It is indeed an extraordinary book - quite unlike any other ... [p.s.] Are not Parnell's
> Gross superstition
> Gross ignorance

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[173] Robert C. K. Ensor, History of England, 1870 - 1914 (Oxford, 1936), p. 71.

[174] Crewe, vol. ii, p. 413.

> Devilish cantankerousness (as shown in the cricket page I 52)[175] remarkable features in his complicated character."[176]

Parnell's only recorded impression of Rosebery occurs in O'Brien's Life. Shortly before Parnell's death, O'Brien asked him about Gladstone's potential successors. The biographer remarked "Lord Rosebery. He has influence." Parnell replied "I know nothing about Lord Rosebery. Probably he has influence. But do you think he is going to use it for Home Rule? Do you think he knows anything about Home Rule or cares anything about it?"[177] These words echo a much repeated question: is Rosebery sincere? or did he have another agenda?

To sum up this brief segment, Rosebery's relationship with Parnell was significant. Many years after Parnell's death, Healy - at the request of Neil Primrose - visited Rosebery in his London home,

> I found Lord Rosebery's interest in everything connected with Parnell was intense. As Neil and I were about to hurry back to the House of Commons for a division, his father said, "I could sit up all night listening to stories about Parnell."[178]

In one way, Parnell's death made the Irish Question far less interesting. Rosebery could be easily bored, and Parnell's death removed a most intriguing and enigmatic Irish politician leaving a void which could not be filled. From his youth, Rosebery was attracted to the romantic martyrs and

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[175] Rosebery refers to an incident recorded in the biography where Parnell refused to allow a cricket match to proceed over a small dispute. His team which travelled from Wicklow to Dublin returned without playing a wicket. This story may be apocryphal as the source of the account was the Pall Mall Gazette which by this time was under Tory control.

[176] Spender MSS, Add MS 46387, f. 21, Rosebery to Spender dated November 15, 1898.

[177] O'Brien, Life of Parnell, vol. ii, p. 338. This conversation (undated but after the split in the Irish Party) was one of O'Brien's last conversations with Parnell.

[178] T. M. Healy, Letters and Leaders of My Day (2 vols., London, 1928), vol. i, p. 310.

lost causes. Parnell was the martyr and Irish Home Rule became the lost cause.

Wales

Rosebery's connection to Wales was limited. Unlike Gladstone, he rarely visited the Principality and had few ties to the area. Prior to kissing hands as Prime Minister in 1894, Rosebery did not explicitly address Welsh issues. His zeal for putting forward Scottish issues did not translate to a similar sympathy for Welsh concerns. However, after becoming Premier, he could not avoid Welsh issues, particularly disestablishment.

On March 13, 1894 - a few days after Rosebery became Prime Minister - Henry Labouchere[179] embarrassed the Government by proposing an amendment to the Queen's speech which called for the abolition of the House of Lords. Eleven Welsh radicals voted for this amendment which passed by a margin of 147 - 145![180] To save face, Rosebery had to negate the amended address and reintroduce the original one. In April 1894, Lloyd George, D. A. Thomas, Frank Edwards and later Herbert Lewis informed Ellis that they would no longer receive the whip.[181] The revolt lasted to May 1894 but it was an ominous warning to the government.

With a precarious majority under 40, Rosebery required the continued support of the Irish, Welsh, and Scottish MPs. The 31 Welsh Liberal MPs had

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[179] Henry Labouchere (1831 - 1912) was an advanced Liberal MP for Middlesex (1867 - 68) and Northhampton (1880 - 1906) who favoured Irish Home Rule and disestablishing the Church of England. He owned and edited Truth (1876 - 1905), a scandalous journal. 'Labby' was a gossip, go-between and consummate intriguer. After 1893, he had an implacable hatred for Rosebery who had refused to appoint him as Ambassador to the United States.

[180] For the record of this debate and remarkable division, see Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 22, cols. 194 - 208, March 13, 1894.

[181] Kenneth O. Morgan, Wales in British Politics 1868-1922 (Cardiff, 1963), p. 144.

unprecedented leverage, which they increasingly employed. Rosebery attempted to forestall the Welsh rebels as well as all other faddists,

> To Welsh Disestablishment mavericks trying to place the government in a minority: What I say to them I say to all in the Liberal Party. If there are any in our ranks who don't care for our policy, who don't care for our personality, who don't trust our zeal and our capacity by all means let them turn us out. I for one will never be a Minister on sufferance.[182]

This can be seen in two ways. Either Rosebery was weary of office and looked ahead to being ousted, or he desired to shake up the party to make his premiership viable. He wanted to appear strong like his idol, Pitt. Rosebery's position was truly unenviable. His opposition was united while his supporters were fragmented and uncooperative.

In 1895 at Cardiff, he noted the challenges for Wales which were shared by all minority nationalities,

> It is hard for the representatives of the other thirty seven millions of population which are comprised in the United Kingdom to give the first and the foremost place to a measure which affects only a million and a half ... And while you are badly placed [for legislation] my native country of Scotland is worse placed, because you sometimes get a bill which applies to you in common with England, but we in Scotland are so situated by law and character and by language perhaps that we invariably require a separate bill for ourselves.[183]

Rosebery was aware that consideration of Welsh affairs engendered bitterness among Scottish Liberals. In addition to Irish demands, Rosebery was confronted with incessant demands from his Welsh and Scottish supporters which were difficult to balance. He noted "my correspondence makes me feel

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[182] Rosebery, "Speech at Birmingham," May 23, 1894, in The Times, May 24, p. 6.

[183] Rosebery "Address at Cardiff," January 18, 1895, in The Times, January 19, p. 9.

that there is a multiplicity of back bones in the Liberal Party, all preparing to be alienated if certain measures are not at once pushed forward."[184]

As with Scottish Disestablishment, Rosebery accepted the expediency of Welsh Disestablishment, without subscribing to the principle. Writing to the Queen, who was greatly alarmed by any measures concerning disestablishment, Rosebery noted that established churches in general,

> Are apt to be injurious to national religion when carried on against the national will, but can be properly maintained and justified when they are approved by the national will ... [In Wales,] the Church of England has lost her hold on the mass of the people, and so it acts as an offence and a stumbling block. It is there very much what Gibraltar is to Spain, a foreign fortress placed on the territory of a jealous, proud and susceptible nation.[185]

In public, he maintained, "an ecclesiastical establishment, like other establishments, must rest on the deliberate will of the people or it rests on nothing."[186] These statements raised concerns that Rosebery was neither sound nor sincere on disestablishment, but backed it merely out of expediency. Rosebery tried to deal with highly emotive questions dispassionately and calculatingly, but succeeded only in alienating himself from both sides in the debate.

In 1894 and 1895, Rosebery's Government introduced Welsh Disestablishment Bills, while the Scots were only able to secure governmental support of a private member's bill. In the Lords, Rosebery remarked,

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[184] Rosebery "Address at Cardiff," January 18, 1895, in The Times, January 19, p. 9. This recalls Rosebery's own complaint in 1882, "I serve a country which is the backbone of our party, but which is never recognised." GP, Add MS 44288, f. 126, Rosebery to Gladstone dated December 16th, 1882.

[185] Buckle (ed.), The Letters of Queen Victoria (3rd ser.), vol. ii, p. 471, Rosebery to the Queen dated January 27, 1895.

[186] Rosebery "Address at Cardiff," January 18, 1895, in The Times, January 19, p. 9.

> I do not put the cases of Wales and Scotland exactly on the same basis. The case of Wales is the demand of a country, so great as to be almost unanimous, for the removal of a branch of the Church of England, which is alien to it, and is, therefore as we are divided, doing far more harm than good to the cause of religion. The case of Scotland on the other hand is a case of a creed substantially identical divided into two parts by a hard and fast line of Church Establishment and non-establishment.[187]

Rosebery may have succeeded in placating some Welsh Liberals, but such sentiments enraged his Scottish supporters. He again tried to gloss over differences which the Scots considered fundamental. The debate over the relationship between church and state convulsed Scotland periodically from 1560 to 1929, and it could not easily be dismissed. Rosebery's remarks on Wales were accurate, but he was in the precarious position of promising an impossibility, because the House of Lords would not pass any measure of disestablishment. Therefore, by giving precedence to Welsh Disestablishment, Rosebery succeeded only in irritating the Scots.

In 1895, Welsh members dealt the death blow to a divided government. After a 14-month absence from the Commons, it was announced on June 19, 1895 that Gladstone cancelled his pairing to give him liberty to discuss some provisions of the Welsh Disestablishment Bill.[188] Morgan dates the downfall of the government to Thomas' amendment of June 20 to the Welsh Disestablishment Bill where the government had a majority of only seven. On the next day, the government was in a minority of seven over the Cordite vote; only 4 (out of 31 Liberals) Welsh MPs voted with the government.[189] From 1892 to 1895, the Welsh were unable to translate their powerful position

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[187] Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 22, col. 29, March 12, 1894. Though Rosebery did not mention him, one difference between Wales and Scotland was the fiery member for Caernarvon Burghs, David Lloyd George. He gave Welsh politics an impetus which was undeniable.

[188] Morgan, Wales in British Politics 1868-1922, p. 154.

[189] Ibid, p. 156.

into legislation.

In comparison to disestablishment, Welsh Home Rule was of secondary importance. After the government's defeat in 1895, Rosebery noted, Welsh Home Rule,

> Is a topic to be thrashed out in Wales itself, and I have debarred myself from the discussion of all such questions of policy until the policy of the government shall have been announced. I must however say this much - that there is serious and perhaps increasing difficulty in obtaining the time and attention of Parliament for the discussion of subjects which do not directly concern England ... It is therefore a legitimate and practical topic for discussion how their difficulty may be met by devolution or otherwise, and I hope that your symposium may have a fruitful and practical result.[190]

Rosebery's response to Welsh Home Rule, like Scottish Home Rule, was the classic Gladstonianism: wait to see whether the question ripens or recedes.

Unlike Gladstone who strongly advocated Welsh issues, Rosebery was sympathetic but rarely active in prosecuting Welsh causes. Wales was not insignificant for the fortunes of the Liberal Party, but in Rosebery's list of priorities, it was never prominent. He had no family or sentimental ties to the Principality, and Welsh concerns did not demand immediate attention. Ironically, Welsh rather than Irish disaffection, led to Rosebery's downfall as Premier.

Conclusion

Rosebery's connection with Irish and Welsh national concerns has been analysed to provide a foundation for understanding his political philosophy. There are several challenges with regard to Ireland. The situation changed

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[190] RP, MS 10131, p. 28, Rosebery to J. Hugh Edwards [copy] dated October 29, 1895.

and Rosebery changed. Gladstone's retirement (1894) and his death (1898) removed one of the strongest influences upon Rosebery. Rosebery was most effective when he built upon the ideas of another, but he was weakest when he was asked to formulate domestic policy. Rosebery tried to turn the Liberal Party from its commitment to Irish Home Rule. The Irish Question remained; Rosebery did not. Rosebery's response to Ireland was complex and variable - like the Irish Question itself.

Gladstone desired to placate and conciliate Ireland. Rosebery desired to see the day when the Union which was initiated in 1800 could be completed. He believed that the best way to solve the Irish Question was by a plan of increased local government, to decentralise authority from Westminster to Ireland. For a portion of his career, he agreed with Gladstone that this devolution could be safely expressed in a Dublin Parliament. However, as time went on, he believed that Gladstonian Home Rule hindered the party and was no longer viable. To Rosebery, the Local Government Act of 1898 gave Home Rule without a local parliament. Rosebery had a broad interpretation of Home Rule and was never firmly wed to the concept of a separate Irish Parliament. In fact over time, he was convinced that a Dublin Parliament was most definitely <u>not</u> the solution to the Irish Question.

Rosebery's greatest weakness was his inability to recognise or weigh the importance of the sentimental needs of the Irish people. By contrast, in Scotland, one of his greatest strengths was that he could understand and articulate the sentimental needs of the Scottish people For more than three decades the Irish people placed their hope in securing their own parliament and these desires could not be easily shunted. Rosebery ignored his own warning which he made at Glasgow in 1886, "Are you as weary as we are of that fatal and dreary policy of giving Ireland everything

except that which she wants!"[191] Ultimately, Rosebery tired of the Irish Question and the incessant demands and wild behaviour of the Irish MPs. Rosebery will not be remembered as an architect of a great plan for the 'salvation' of Ireland but he consistently maintained a sincere desire to see the nation as a whole more fully integrated into the 'commonwealth of nations.' Rosebery accurately diagnosed the illness, but he was unable to solve the Irish Question.

[191] Rosebery, "Address at Glasgow," June 17, 1886, in The Times, June 18, p. 11.

7. The Political Ideas of Rosebery

> Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom; and a great Empire and little minds go ill together.
> Edmund Burke, "Second Speech on Conciliation with America"

Reviewing Rosebery's political career, disparities and incongruities seem to predominate, but on closer inspection, a coherent political ideology can be seen. In his article, "The Political Ideas of Parnell," F. S. L. Lyons echoes T. P. O'Connor's lament, "it is not easy to describe the mental life of a man who is neither expansive nor introspective."[1] The challenge is equally great with Rosebery for the exact opposite reasons: he was both expansive and introspective. A judicious selection of extracts from his speeches, writings and private memoranda could be used to prove almost anything. As Raymond eloquently noted,

> Lord Rosebery in short defies the label. He is hot ice and wondrously strange snow. By omitting certain sets of facts, and placing others in a strong light, he can be proved almost anything we like - a man before his age, a man behind it; a strong, far seeing statesman, a sentimentalist bemused by his own incantations and catch-words; a patriot too pure for the vulgar commerce of politics, a politician too slippery to be trusted by men themselves not over-particular. This difficulty has been so strongly felt that most commentators have imitated the judge who never heard more than one side of a case, because to hear both confused his mind.[2]

This does not make an analysis of Rosebery's political philosophy impossible, but rather it highlights the need for caution. Passions characterise Rosebery's career. One passion which gives unity and coherence (as far as either is possible) to an otherwise disjointed career is imperialism. He had a multi-faceted political philosophy in which the empire was the hub from which all

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[1] T. P. O'Connor, The Parnell Movement (London, 1886), p. 339, quoted in Lyons, "The Political Ideas of Parnell," p. 749.

[2] Raymond, p. 236.

other issues radiated and converged. Rosebery's imperialism cuts across and undergirds his political ideology.

To preserve and strengthen the Empire, Rosebery played the role of a Victorian Halifax: he was a classic trimmer.[3] As a Liberal, Rosebery tried to trim the sails which powered the ship of state in order to maximise the harmony and prosperity of each part of the Empire. The Liberal Party seemed to be the natural vehicle to achieve his vision because,

> The great mass of the political power of the nation is Liberal - for the nation does not incline to extremes either way, but it wishes to be abreast of the times. It does not desire to live in convulsion on the one hand or in stupor on the other, but its instincts are Liberal i.e. negatively that neither class nor creed nor interest shall hinder the progress of its national development, and, positively, that it shall enjoy freedom, order, good government, and what good government cannot always secure prosperity.[4]

In Rosebery's view, an unyielding conservatism was as dangerous as an unrestricted radicalism.

I contend that there is a depth to Rosebery which has heretofore been overlooked. He was not a speaker without substance. Martel, though critical of Rosebery, conceded

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[3] Macaulay's remarks on Halifax can again be applied to Rosebery, "What distinguishes him from all other English statesmen is this, that, through a long public life, and through frequent and violent revolutions of public feeling, he almost invariably took that view of the great questions of his time which history has finally adopted." Thomas Babington, Lord Macaulay, The History of England from the Accession of James the Second (Macmillan 6 vol. ed., London, 1913), vol. v, p. 2484, in Joseph Hamburger, Macaulay and the Whig Tradition (Chicago, 1976), p. 92.

[4] RP, MS 10177, f. 152, memorandum Imperialism, n.d. [post - 1902] composed by Rosebery for himself. He expressed these exact sentiments 25 years earlier. At the first meeting of the East and North of Scotland Liberal Association on November 6, 1877, he asserted "I believe that Liberalism is the principle in politics that neither class not creed nor privilege shall hinder the progress of our national development." SLA MSS, vol. 1, p. 98.

> Imperialism also explains the attention Rosebery paid to questions that may conveniently be placed under the heading of nationalism and education, subjects that seemed inextricably connected with the future power and prosperity of the Empire.[5]

This observation can be broadened. In addition to his attention to nationalism, his Imperialism also explained Rosebery's attempts to reform the House of Lords, to devolve power from Westminster and to safeguard the Monarchy.

Imperialism and Nationalism

> Where there is no vision, the people perish.
> Proverbs, Chapter 29, Verse 18 (Authorised Version)

In the late 19th century, the Liberal Party was awash with creeds which served to narrow its appeal. Rosebery, however, attempted to capture a broader vision for the party by directing its attention to a traditionally Conservative stronghold: the Empire. To Rosebery, the Empire was a great blessing rather than a cumbersome obligation. Gladstone (the party leader) had a different perspective,

> I cannot tell you what I think of the nobleness of the inheritance [i.e. the Empire] which has descended upon us, of the sacredness of the duty of maintaining it. I will not condescend to make it a part of controversial politics. It is a part of my being, of my flesh and blood, of my heart and soul. For those ends I have laboured through my youth and manhood till my hairs are grey. In that faith and practice, I have lived; in that faith and practice I will die.[6]

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[5] Gordon Martel, Imperial Diplomacy: Rosebery and the Failure of Foreign Policy (Montreal, 1986), p. 8.

[6] Gladstone, "Speech at Edinburgh," March 17, 1880, in The Scotsman, March 18, pp. 10 - 11, republished in 1903 by the Liberal League as a pamphlet entitled, Gladstone's Imperialism.

Gladstone also knew the cost of the colonies,

> I have always maintained that we are bound by ties of honour and conscience to our colonies. But the idea that the colonies add to the strength of the mother country appears to me to be as dark a superstition as any that existed in the middle ages.[7]

Many Liberal 'Little Englanders' went further than Gladstone opposing all things imperial particularly any policy - Liberal or Conservative - which savoured of expansion. Rosebery did not simply latch onto a popular issue; he sought to bring his party and ultimately the nation around to a new view of the Empire which differed from both the traditional Conservative and Liberal views.[8] Ever canny, Rosebery realised no other major Liberal leader - apart from Forster - had grappled with the challenges of drawing a vast and disparate Empire closer together. He chose a platform on which he was the principal speaker - a position he enjoyed.

Rosebery's imperialism was not a passing fancy or an isolated interest. His imperialism was interconnected with his patriotism and nationalism. As Raymond noted,

> He did love Scotland for the things most worthy in the Scottish character - its honesty, manliness, tenacity, intellectual curiosity, romanticism. He did love the Empire not only because it was big, but because it was beneficent ... The two patriotisms, the lesser patriotism of the Scot and the wider patriotism of the Imperialist, were fundamental passions, and endured throughout the changes of his

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[7] From a conversation on January, 13, 1896, with Lionel A. Tollemache, in Tollemache, Talks With Mr Gladstone (London, 1903) which was fully reprinted in Asa Briggs (ed.), Gladstone's Boswell: Late Victorian Conversations (Sussex, 1984), pp. 135 - 6.

[8] According to Rhodes James, p. 157, "There is nothing more noble in Rosebery's life than his imperial concept, uncluttered as it was by the turgid emotionalism of Kipling, the ideological ruthlessness of Chamberlain, or the terrible misinterpretations of Milner, for each of whom he felt a strong antipathy."

life.[9]

In this framework, Scottish problems were imperial problems and imperial problems were Scottish problems.[10] Rosebery believed that if properly channelled, nationalism - whether Scottish, Irish or Welsh - could strengthen imperial bonds, but if misapplied (as in Ireland), nationalism could undermine and ultimately destroy the Empire.

Rosebery's imperialism was neither hastily constructed nor ill-considered. In 1874, when he addressed the Social Science Congress in Glasgow,he made his first clear public pronouncement on imperial issues,

> You propose to discuss, "What are the best means of drawing together the interests of the United Kingdom, India, and the colonies?" I submit that the primary means are to send forth colonists who shall be worthy of the country they leave and the destiny they seek.[11]

It was Britain's responsibility to raise and educate an 'Imperial Race' to populate and administer the great territory of the Empire. Scotland was a great example of a nation, who through her tradition of education and opportunity had a disproportionately high influence on the Empire. In this wide-ranging speech, Rosebery identified the social ills of Britain which had wide repercussions. The Empire was losing its most precious commodity: its

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[9] Raymond, p. 55.

[10] This view was not novel. Fifty years earlier, Sir Walter Scott recognised that Scottish grievances "cannot be confined to Scotland alone (for no component part of the Empire can have sufferings which do not extend to the others) but must reach England and Ireland too. When a limb of the human body is disjointed or broken, the whole frame must feel the effect of it." Malachi Malagrowther (i.e. Sir Walter Scott), Thoughts on the Proposed Change of Currency and Other Late Alterations, as They Affect or are Intended to Affect the Kingdom of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1828), Second letter, p. 20.

[11] Rosebery, "Address to the Social Sciences Congress," Glasgow, September 30, 1874, in The Scotsman, October 1, pp. 5 - 6. This same concern was present 26 years later, "An Empire such as ours requires as its first condition an Imperial race - a race vigorous and industrious and intrepid." Rosebery, "Glasgow Rectorial Address," November 16, 1900, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 250.

people. Many viewed the Empire simply as a source of revenue to be exploited, but Rosebery saw the Empire as requiring responsible and efficient handling and input. If education was poor in Britain, the Empire ultimately suffered and if the Empire suffered, Britain paid the price for this deficit. Jacobson has maintained that Rosebery emphasised the necessity of putting "the Empire on a business footing. In so doing he turned the idea of Empire inward, focusing it on Britain instead of overseas and diminishing its aura of confidence."[12] I believe this criticism is unfair and inaccurate. Rosebery did view the Empire in terms of its influence on Britain, but he also considered Britain's impact on the Empire. The blessings of the Empire flowed both ways. In Rosebery's view, the Empire held the key to solving some of Britain's most severe problems including overcrowding.[13]

In 1878, Rosebery returned to this theme of rearing an imperial race to meet imperial requirements,

> I will say there is one imperial entity which I believe in and that is an imperial race ... If we wish to be an imperial race, it will not be by flaunting words of Empire or imperialism about. It will be by being true to our history, our traditions, our character and ourselves.[14]

Rosebery appeals to the common historical and sentimental attachments which connected Scotland and the Empire. Rosebery's imperialism did not

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[12] Peter D. Jacobson, "Rosebery and Liberal Imperialism, 1899 - 1903," Journal of British Studies, vol. xiii (1973), p. 92.

[13] A decade later, Rosebery expanded on this theme, "squeezed as we are, pinched as we are, crowded as we are in this island, we have to look to some open spaces to which we can send the surplus population which we cannot contain." Rosebery, "Speech at Dundee," April 15, 1884, in The Scotsman, April 16, p. 9.

[14] "Meeting of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution," November 5, 1878, in The Scotsman, November 6, p. 5. Lord Carnarvon gave the inaugural address at this meeting and Rosebery spoke these words as part of his vote of thanks to Carnarvon. Also in attendance at this meeting were such movers and shapers as Bouverie Primrose, J. R. Findlay, Taylor Innes, Lord Young, Sir Alexander Grant, James Donaldson, John Stuart Blackie, Ralph Richardson and Duncan McLaren.

merely effect the foreign and colonial relations of the United Kingdom but it required a refinement of domestic policies. As he noted in Australia in 1884,

> "Our domestic policy for many years past has consisted of pouring new wine into old bottles, and our colonial policy has consisted of pouring old wine into new bottles ... I believe that when we have to face new problems we must face them on new lines and by new methods, and disregard some of the old tradition that we have inherited from our ancestors."[15]

Also in Australia, he delivered one of his most memorable and significant speeches on his vision of the Empire,

> I say that these are no longer colonies in the ordinary sense of the term, but I claim that [Australia] is a nation - a nation not in aspiration or in the future, but in performance and in fact. I claim that this country has established its claim to be a nation, and that its nationality is now and will be henceforward recognised by the world. ... [But] does this fact of your being a nation, and I think you feel yourselves to be a nation, imply separation from the Empire? God Forbid! There is no need for any nation, however great, leaving the British Empire, because the British Empire is a Commonwealth of Nations.[16]

Again, Rosebery coined a memorable phrase to encapsulate the blessings of the Empire. It was an attractive concept and a felicitous phrase which embodied Rosebery's formula for reconciling national identities within an imperial setting. The imperial bond does not negate or undermine the unique identity of the component nations of the Empire. Imperialism does not imply a sterile uniformity, nor does diversity presuppose disintegration. Also, if Australia satisfied Rosebery's criteria for a nation, Scotland most certainly did.

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[15] Rosebery, "Farewell Banquet," Adelaide, January 18, 1884, in Rosebery, Australian Speeches (Privately Printed, 1884), p. 52. This is Rosebery's variation on Mark, chapter 2, vs. 22 (Authorised Version), "And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles."

[16] Rosebery, "Speech at Adelaide," January 18, 1884, in Australian Speeches, pp. 50 - 51. The Commonwealth of Nations became a reality in 1931 - two years after Rosebery's death.

He realised that in the case of Scotland a vibrant national identity did was in no way contrary to a love for the empire.

As noted in Chapter 3, Rosebery's imperial travels greatly influenced his personal and political outlook. Rosebery realised that Britain could learn about local government and devolution from the colonies. The grievances of the Empire and Scotland were almost identical. Accordingly, after his return, Rosebery turned his attention (first in Scotland) to the important question of "the extension of the system of local self government and of local administration."[17] After receiving the freedom of Aberdeen in 1885, Rosebery argued that increased local and county government "will remove the enormous burden from the legislature and free the hands of the legislature for more necessary and more imperial work."[18] Yet, he reassured his Scottish supporters, "I hope I am a Scotsman all over and all through; I owe all duty and all affection to Scotland. But that in my mind in no degree diminishes but rather increases my feeling of duty and affection to Great Britain and the Empire."[19] While there was an imperial element in his thinking prior to 1883, his colonial tours solidified and matured his views on the Empire. From 1884, Rosebery's focus is not less Scottish but it is certainly more imperial. While remaining the Uncrowned King of Scotland, Rosebery became the 'First Citizen of the Empire.'

In a party overwhelmed with fads, Rosebery carved out a niche which was neither narrow nor parochial. Rosebery even extolled Wallace, the great Scottish patriot, for his contributions to the British Empire,

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[17] Rosebery, "Speech at Dundee," April 15, 1884, in The Scotsman, April 16, p. 9.

[18] Rosebery, "Speech at Aberdeen," September 11, 1884, in The Times, September 12, p. 5.

[19] Rosebery, "Receiving the Freedom of Paisley," October 16, 1885, in The Times, October 17, p. 6.

> Let us all then, Englishmen and Scotsmen together, rejoice in this anniversary and in the memory of this hero, for he at Stirling made Scotland great; and if Scotland were not great the Empire of all the Britains would not stand where it does.[20]

Thus, the most evocative symbol of a vibrant and independent Scotland became a pillar to support Britain and the Empire.

Rosebery never embraced a grasping form of imperialism, but he did not exclude expansion. In 1893, at the apex of his power in the Foreign Office, he made a speech which contained yet another phrase which became associated with Rosebery and his form of imperialism,

> It is said that our Empire is already large enough and does not need extension. That would be true enough if the world were elastic, but unfortunately it is not elastic, and we are engaged at the present moment in the language of mining in "pegging out claims for the future."[21]

The Empire, in Rosebery's view, gave the nation a future whereas domestically, sectional and divisive issues threatened to overwhelm and split the nation. Rosebery's most important contribution to the political debate was his Liberal Imperialist creed which he formulated in the 1880s and vigorously advanced in the 1890s,

> Liberal Imperialism implies, first, the maintenance of Empire; secondly, the opening of new areas for our surplus population; thirdly, the suppression of the slave trade; fourthly, the development of missionary enterprise; and fifthly, the development of our commerce, which so

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[20] Rosebery, "Wallace," Stirling, September 13, 1897, in Wallace, Burns, Stevenson: Appreciations by Lord Rosebery (Stirling, 1905), p. 24. This address helped mark the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Stirling Bridge.

[21] Rosebery, "Speech at the Royal Colonial Institute," March 1, 1893, in The Times, March 2, p. 6.

often needs it.[22]

In this brief definition, it is clear that the blessings of the Empire flow both to and from the 'mother country.'[23] As Hamer noted, Liberal Imperialism "offered a great systematic and comprehensive concept that unified and guided the conduct of Liberals in many hitherto uncoordinated areas of policy."[24] More accurately, it offered the potential for unity, but as events later demonstrated, the Empire became an issue of contention.

Liberal Imperialism, though receding from Gladstonian orthodoxy, was still within the broad spectrum of Liberalism. Yet, coexistence within the party was difficult and ultimately impossible. Firstly, after Gladstone's resignation in 1894, fissures in the party (including the divide over the Empire) were more apparent. Secondly, the outbreak of the South African War shattered any illusion of party unity or harmony. The struggle between Campbell-Bannerman and Rosebery for the control of the party was not only a personal contest but also was a clash between rival views of the Empire.

Rosebery defined Liberal Imperialism and Liberal Imperialism defined Rosebery. Though he gloried in the promise and potential of the Empire, Rosebery was well aware of the great challenges and hazards which were entailed in its maintenance and preservation. In concluding his study, Martel acknowledged Rosebery's foresight,

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[22] Rosebery, "Address in the Albert Hall," July 5, 1895, in The Times, July 6, p. 14.

[23] In 1900, Rosebery restated the broad extent of his Imperial Ethos, "For from my point of view there is not a close in the darkest quarters of Glasgow, or a Crofter's cabin in the Hebrides, which is not a matter of Imperial concern; quite as truly in its proportion and degree, as those more glowing topics to which that adjective is too often limited." Rosebery, "Glasgow Rectorial Address," November 16, 1900, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 261.

[24] D. A. Hamer, Liberal Politics in the Age of Gladstone and Rosebery (Oxford, 1972), p. 263.

> For all his talk of the glory of Empire, the duties of an imperial race, and the necessity of developing the estates already owned by the British, it seems clear that he was moved to affirm such doctrines because he felt that the people of Britain were losing their sense of mission, that the Empire was ceasing to appear to be part of the divine providence. The Empire for all the blessings that it brought was costly and difficult to manage, and it was easier for people to see the costs than the benefits. If the British people refused to pay the costs of defending the Empire they would ineluctably be drawn into some political commitment in Europe. The cost of refusing to shoulder the burden of Empire, he believed, would ultimately be the Empire itself, and with it the peace and prosperity of the British Isles. Was he wrong?[25]

Rosebery was proven right. The Empire required active support not merely passive acquiesence and it required a breadth of vision and perseverance uncommon in politics. During the darkest years of the Boer War, Rosebery's imperial faith remained strong, but many, even in Scotland, began to question the true cost of the Empire.

As alluded to earlier, for Rosebery, imperialism and nationalism were not mutually exclusive - in fact they were mutually dependent. A sound body depended on the health of all its members and an Empire required contented and vibrant nations. Rosebery asserted in 1886,

> When we forget that historical national life - and I call it historic, because the very essence of our national life rests on our history - when we forget our individual national life as Scotsmen, you can be sure that the history of Scotland has come to an end. The principle of nationality I take to be this, that we should cling to everything essential to us as a historical nation - as a historical and in one sense, a separate nation; and because we are a historical nation, we should remember with all the more pride that we are one of many nations that go to make up the greatest empire the world has ever seen.[26]

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[25] Martel, Imperial Diplomacy, p. 262.

[26] Rosebery, "Speech at Linlithgow," September 24, 1886, in The Scotsman, September 25, 1886, p. 7, was quoted in Home Rule and Political Parties in Scotland, a Review (SHRA, 1889), p. 4 and in William Mitchell, Home Rule for Scotland and Imperial Federation (SHRA,

Rosebery offers an ethos to contain Scottish nationalism within the Empire. He believed that Scotland needed to safeguard her nationality and he gave significant impetus to this movement. Unlike Parnell, Rosebery tried to fix the *ne plus ultra* of his nation. Rosebery secured advances but he did place Scottish nationalism within firm boundaries, by drawing upon a somewhat idealised history of the past and offering an integrated vision for the future. This image was attractive in the relatively peaceful 1880s and 1890s, but it was damaged by the Boer War and hopelessly shattered by the Great War.

Rosebery's definition of nation and nationalism are broad and inclusive. In 1887, after his second colonial tour, Rosebery remarked,

> What makes a nation is not the occasional or fortuitous arrival of a number of persons, but the community of experience of joy, of sorrow of suffering, of aspirations of nerves, of country and of religion. I claim for Scotland and for the Scotch that we are a country and a nation under the definition.[27]

A true patriotism required a distinct history and a knowledge and appreciation of the nation's heritage. In this regard, Rosebery, possibly more than any other in his generation, reminded the Scots of their great historical heritage, while encouraging them to take up their even greater imperial inheritance. By implication, Rosebery maintains in this passage that nationalism can exist within a greater entity (either Britain or the Empire), without being compromised. He was a nationalist and an imperialist - a combination which today seems incongruous. Rosebery, as a Scot, or more accurately a half-Scot, helped to preserve Scotland's distinct heritage while maintaining her links to the Empire.

1892), title page.

[27] Rosebery, "Address to Glasgow Liberal Association," April 27, 1887, in The Times, April 28, p. 10.

Despite the Act of Union (1707) which effaced much of Scotland's 'peculiar' identity, Scotland retained the vestiges of nationhood: her ecclesiastical, educational, banking and legal systems. Rosebery's speeches and activism helped to prevent or at least forestall any erosion of Scotland's distinct identity. In 1882, Rosebery conceded that there were prudent limits to nationalism,

> It is difficult in some circumstances to unite with perfect compatibility the feeling for nationality with loyalty to the centre. There is no such difficulty for Scotland. But the question is interesting how far the separate nationality may be asserted without danger to the common bond.[28]

Here, Rosebery by implication refers to the Ireland where it appeared that national sentiments were irreconcilable with a larger loyalty. Ireland pressed her national claims to the limit, while the Scots clearly maintained their loyalty. But what is this loyalty to and what is its cost? Obviously, Rosebery contends that it is a loyalty to Britain and the Empire. The cost is more difficult to assess, but would include a diminution of local sovereignty in favour of securing the wider good of the Empire.

Rosebery hoped that nationalism and imperialism could be compatible, but there was always the danger that one loyalty would overshadow or eclipse the other. Rosebery was correct that Scotland generally achieved a proper balance. Throughout the 19th century, Scottish national demands were clearly couched in terms of unquestioned loyalty to the Union and to Britain. To Rosebery, nationalism grounded in loyalty was to be fostered, while nationalism in the form of threats and ultimatums had to be opposed. Also, the natural outcome, as he saw it, of nationalism was a greater allegiance to the Empire. Nationalism which fostered anti-imperial sentiments was not

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[28] Rosebery, "Edinburgh Rectorial Address," November 4, 1882, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 110.

beneficial. Rosebery, as an orator and a statesman, tried to reconcile the forces of nationalism and imperialism in the Liberal Party and in Scotland. His success in this endeavour was mixed.

House of Lords

> Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set.
> Proverbs, Chapter 22, verse 28 (Authorised Version).[29]

Effective government requires a proper balance between its component parts and a large Empire required efficient government. At the end of the 19th century, one of the most glaring weaknesses of the British constitution was the House of Lords. When Rosebery acceded to his peerage in 1868, he realised that the Lords was in danger of becoming ridiculous or impossible - or both. From the 1880s, he developed a far-reaching plan to reform the Lords based on delegation, exclusion, comprehension, and option. There would be means by which some peers were delegated to sit in the Lords. Certain 'black-sheep' would be excluded because of their unfitness. The scope of the Lords would be widened to include a greater cross-section of interests in Britain and the Empire. Finally, peers would be given the option to refuse their summons to sit in the Lords and to pursue a career in the Commons.[30] Though his efforts at reform proved ineffectual, they were significant efforts to redress a serious imbalance and deserve closer consideration.

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[29] J. A. Hammerton, Lord Rosebery, Imperialist (London, 1901), p. 75. Rosebery had this verse inscribed onto a panel on the east side of his newly-renovated Barnbougle castle on his Dalmeny estate. He was going to destroy the ruined castle until he was told that ships used it as a landmark for navigation. Instead, he restored the castle to become his personal library and sanctuary.

[30] Rosebery often expanded on this last point, though he never seriously considered or attempted to renounce his own peerage. "A man should have the right to choose for good and all whether he will be a peer or not, and that he should not be reluctantly condemned to sit in a house with whose principles and practices he may have no sympathy at all." Rosebery, "Speech at Wrexham," October 26, 1885, in The Times, October 27, p. 7.

The House of Lords had no shortage of Liberal critics. It was a morass into which almost all Liberal legislation sank. Dangerfield noted that the Lords was a useful enemy for the Liberals,

> In its political aspect, the House of Lords was extremely conservative, quite stupid, immensely powerful, and a determined enemy of the Liberal Party. It was also an essential enemy. If anything went wrong, if one's radical supporters became too insistent, if one's inability to advance became too noticeable, one could always blame the Lords.[31]

Rosebery stood apart as a Liberal who proposed reform rather than abolition. Gladstone by contrast was only marginally concerned with the Lords.[32] The Conservatives were quite content to maintain their hereditary preponderance. To his critics, Rosebery responded, "If the house is in such a condition that it will not bear to be touched, it does not need much foresight to see that it will soon become an unsafe structure."[33] He realised that timing was crucial: he urged reform long before the situation reached an acute stage. Rosebery asserted, "great constitutional questions should not be dealt with at moments of passion and revolution, but they should be dealt with by the calm and unbiased reason of the people of the country."[34]

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[31] George Dangerfield, The Strange Death of Liberal England (London, 1966), p. 21.

[32] In November 1885, Gladstone wrote, "Mr Parnell is apprehensive of the opposition of the House of Lords. That idea weighs little with me. ... [p.s.] The first essential, as I have said in public, is a sufficient and independent Liberal majority; the second is to keep it together. If these two can be had, there is no fear of the House of Lords. It would not dare: and if it did, would repent quickly, and probably in vain." RP, MS 10023, f. 112, Gladstone to Rosebery dated November 13, 1885. This implies that Gladstone's scheme for Home Rule in 1886 was not well considered.

[33] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 289, col. 954, June 20, 1884.

[34] Rosebery, "Speech at Bradford," October 27, 1894, in The Times, October 29, p. 7. Rosebery follows Macaulay's line quite closely. In concluding his essay on Hallam [Edinburgh Review, September, 1828], Macaulay noted, "In all movements of the human mind which tend to great revolutions, there is a crisis at which moderate concession may amend, conciliate, and preserve," in F. C. Montague (ed.), Critical and Historical Essays, Contributed to the Edinburgh Review by Lord Macaulay (3 vols., London, 1903), vol. i, p. 202.

After 1884, Rosebery actively campaigned to reform the Lords in order to forward his imperial agenda. Firstly, the composition of the Lords could be reformed to include representatives from the Colonies and self-governing dominions. Secondly, if the Commons and the Lords were more harmoniously aligned, Westminster would be more efficient and the Empire would benefit accordingly. In his long struggle, Rosebery was repeatedly rebuffed, but to his credit, he persisted. In 1884, 1888, 1894 - 95, 1908 and 1910 his proposals were either ignored, refuted or discarded. At the Scottish Liberal Association's national conference in 1889, Rosebery warned the party, "to every one of the reforms in your programme, the House of Lords will offer an uncompromising opposition."[35] By 1894, Rosebery realised the futility of his position, "I have been 'a prophet crying in the wilderness.' No one has paid the slightest attention to me."[36] After 1895, Rosebery remained active in the House of Lords but his contempt for his fellow peers grew.[37]

When the Liberals were restored to power in 1906, Rosebery's efforts to reform the Lords gave way as he realised that it had become one of the last fortresses against the encroaching spectre of socialism. In response to Lloyd George's Limehouse speech, Rosebery denounced the 'People's Budget' at Glasgow in a fiery address. F. E. Smith attributed the ultimate rejection of the 1909 Budget, and the subsequent crisis to this speech.[38] Rosebery - "in his

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[35] SLA MSS, vol. 2, p. 129, SLA National Conference in Glasgow, November 22, 1889.

[36] Rosebery, "Speech at Edinburgh," March 17, 1894, in The Times, March 19, p. 8. The allusion is to John the Baptist, in Matthew, Chapter 3, verse 3.

[37] Edmund Gosse, the Librarian of the House of Lords, recorded the following incident, "We had a little storm in a teapot this afternoon. Lord Rosebery jumped up and complained that the Prime Minister [Balfour] in another place had charged him with 'calumny.' He worked himself into what seemed a very spurious rage, thumping the table swaying his fat back about, and puffing out his purple cheeks. He does not even affect to address the House, but speaks entirely to the Press gallery." Gosse MSS, Diary, f. 8, entry for March 11 [1904].

[38] "The oration ... convinced the simpler-minded among the leaders of the Unionist party that the quarrel was good enough to justify the House of Lords in throwing out a budget which had only to be passed for its flagrant follies to manifest themselves." Viscount Birkenhead [F. E. Smith], Points of View (2 vols., London, 1922), vol. ii, p. 127.

self-appointed role of political anchorite"[39] - believed that if the Lords was abolished or greatly compromised the entire constitution would be imperilled.[40] Rosebery realised the ulterior motives of many of his opponents,

> The Irish desire the abolition of the House of Lords, avowedly and declaredly in order to get rid of the last obstacle to Home Rule ... an object to which the majority of the people of England have repeatedly shown that they are diametrically opposed.[41]

To Rosebery's horror, the reform of the Lords had become inextricably linked to Irish Home Rule. The only remaining path was to retreat.

Rosebery's attempts to reform the House of Lords exemplified his desire to restore balance to the constitution, without attempting drastic revision. With an unreformed House of Lords, Liberal measures were at the mercy of an almost exclusively Conservative body. Progress was stymied and efficiency was stifled. The House of Lords was a natural (albeit ironic) opponent for Rosebery. Trimming was needed lest the peers' intransigence sparked revolt at home or disaffection in the Empire. Rosebery's desire for reform runs throughout his career. *Salus populi suprema est lex*[42] was a motto which applied to Rosebery's seemingly single-handed reform campaign.

Decentralisation

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[39] Dangerfield, The Strange Death of Liberal England, p. 63.

[40] Rosebery drew a striking parallel to the events of the English Civil War. He noted that the resolution of February 6, 1649 which abolished the House of Lords was followed on the next day by a resolution abolishing the monarchy. Hansard, Lords, 5th ser., vol. 5, col. 150, March 14, 1910.

[41] Hansard, 5th ser., vol. 5, col. 144, March 14, 1910.

[42] "The well-being of the people is the first great law," in T. Riley, Dictionary of Latin Quotations (London, 1856), p. 406.

In addition to reforming the Lords, efficiency and greater imperial harmony could be secured through decentralisation or devolution. Before embarking for Australia, Rosebery penned the following observations in San Francisco on October 19, 1883, "The United States do not seem to me to be so much changed in the seven years since I last visited the country, as I expected. But they appear to be in the happy condition of requiring less and less government."[43] Rosebery belonged to the classic school of free trade, laissez-faire Liberalism which believed that governmental interference should be minimised. As Rosebery's father noted, "Legislation can do much, but it cannot do all."[44] Coupled with his views against government intrusion, Rosebery saw great value in freeing Westminster from matters which could be better despatched by local or national bodies.

From county and parish councils, to Home Rule and Imperial Federation, Rosebery consistently worked to ease the burdens of the Imperial Parliament at Westminster. As he noted in Glasgow in 1890, "Parliament if it is to deal with social questions - and it must deal with social questions - will have to deal with them, not by centralisation but by decentralisation."[45] If devolution was secured, the blessings would be vast. Localities, nations or colonies would have power to decide matters for which they were best qualified and Westminster would be freed to devote its energies to questions of imperial significance including trade, defence and foreign relations.

In his 'Predominant Partner' speech of March 12, 1894, Rosebery's broad (and positive) views on Home Rule have been overlooked. Home Rule had,

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[43] GP, Add MS 44288, f. 183, Rosebery to Gladstone dated October 19, 1883.

[44] Lord Dalmeny [Archibald Primrose], An Address to the Middle Classes upon the Subject of Gymnastic Exercises (2nd ed., London, 1848), p. 4.

[45] Rosebery, "Receiving the Freedom of Glasgow," October 10, 1890, in The Times, October 11, p. 7.

> a triple aspect. It has in the first place, the aspect that I believe that Ireland will never be contented until this measure of Home Rule be granted to her; and that, though you may come in on other issues and succeed us who sit here, your policy of palliatives is bound to fail. In the second place, I believe that not merely have we in our Irish policy to satisfy those who live in the island of Ireland itself ... but for the good of our Empire and for the continuity and solidarity of our relations with our brethren across the Atlantic, it is necessary that we should produce an Irish policy which shall satisfy the Irish people. And lastly I view it from the highest Imperial grounds, because I believe that the maintenance of this Empire depends not on centralisation, but on decentralisation, and that if you once commence to tread this path, you will have to give satisfaction under the same conditions certainly to Scotland and possibly to Wales, not in the same degree or possibly not in the same fashion, but so as to relieve this groaning Imperial Parliament from the burden of legislation under which it labours.[46]

Properly managed, Home Rule offered a great boon to the Empire and its constituent parts. However, Rosebery angered the Irish and his fellow Liberals by refusing to adopt an unbending affinity to one form of devolution. In 1895, he went beyond the limited question of Home Rule to discuss the larger issue of devolution throughout the United Kingdom,

> In a large measure of devolution, subject to imperial control, lies the secret of the future working of our Empire ... It has been by such a system of devolution that we have been able to found, outside these kingdoms, the greatest empire that the world has ever seen; and we shall find in the same principle the solution of many if not most of our difficulties inside. In that respect the cause of Ireland stands first but not last. The Liberal Party in my opinion, will never find its full strength until it has enlisted all the power and sympathy and freedom which it would gain in every part of the United Kingdom by the systematized devolution of local business to the localities themselves.[47]

Here Rosebery followed a very Gladstonian line of reasoning. He saw the

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[46] Hansard, 4th ser., vol. 22, cols. 32 - 33, March 12, 1894.

[47] Rosebery, "Address at Cardiff," January 18, 1895, in The Times, January 19, p. 9.

benefits which Home Rule gave to Canada and the self-governing colonies and realised its potential for strengthening the tie which bound nations to the centre. Ireland remained the top priority, but Rosebery implies that devolution in Ireland did not necessitate a Home Rule Parliament. Also devolution could remove divisive and essentially local issues to local bodies who were better informed to deal with the matter.

Rosebery's strong advocacy of decentralisation explains the vehemence with which he assailed socialism: socialism was not only a rejection of capitalism it was the embodiment of centralisation. The life of Edmund Burke provides some illumination to the later and more reactionary phase of Rosebery's career. Rosebery's words on Burke apply to himself,

> Burke was an ardent reformer all his life, but ended in a frenzy of Toryism so violent that it transcended the ministerial Toryism of that day. That appears inconsistent on the face of it, but it seems to me to bear no real inconsistency. The secret of Burke's character is this in my judgement - he loved reform and hated revolution. He hated revolution because he loved reform. He regarded revolution as the greatest possible enemy of that large steady, persistent, moderate reform that he loved, and because by its indiscriminating violence it provoked indiscriminate reaction.[48]

While Burke feared the twin horrors of anarchy and atheism of the French Revolution, Rosebery saw a different but equally pressing threat. During the 1909 Budget crisis, Rosebery identified what he saw to be the more pressing issue, namely that the Liberal Government was moving toward socialism,

> There is little left for one in my position but the melancholy and unpopular privilege of telling what he believes to be the truth. I think my friends are moving upon the path that leads to socialism. How far they are advanced upon that path I will not say, but on that path I at any rate cannot follow them an inch (loud cheers). Any form of

[48] Rosebery, "Burke," October 30, 1904, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, pp. 134 - 5.

> protection is an evil, but socialism is the end of all, the negation of faith, of family, of the monarchy, of Empire.[49]

Socialism, in Rosebery's view, imperilled the state and corrupted the individual, "Individual independence, for which Chalmers fought, and in which he believed as the backbone and strength of our rugged Scottish character, has almost ceased to operate as a factor."[50] The qualities that defined the rugged Scot were threatened just as the ties which united the Empire were imperilled. The Government had to maintain a proper balance. In the 1870s and 1880s, Rosebery was a progressive force pushing the nation to consider its future, whereas in the 1900s and 1910s, he was a force of reaction trying to hold back the more impetuous forces who seemed bent on destroying the foundation of the Empire which Rosebery had long laboured to preserve. He could echo the words of Burke, "I had a state to preserve as well as a state to reform."[51]

Rosebery argued that an overreliance by individuals on the state had crippling and far-reaching effects. In 1872, Rosebery reflected,

> Almsgiving is another case where persons by thoughtless charity encourage persons (often able bodied) to rely on a means of subsistence which may fail them at any moment, & leave them as destitute and more unfitted for work than before.[52]

By 1908, however, his fears were being realised,

> As things are, we in Scotland do not take much or even ask much from

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[49] Rosebery, "Speech at Glasgow," September 10, 1909, in The Scotsman, September 11, p. 10.

[50] Rosebery, "Chalmers," Glasgow, April 14, 1915, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, p. 240.

[51] John Morley, Burke (London, 1885), p. 92. In this regard, Rosebery followed Macaulay.

[52] RP, MS 10189, f. 75, Rosebery's private memorandum dated September 24, 1872.

> the state. But the State invites us every day to lean upon it. I seem to hear the wheedling and alluring whisper, "Sound you may be; we bid you be a cripple. Do you see? Be blind. Do you hear? Be deaf. Do you walk? Be not so venturesome. Here is a crutch for one arm; when you get accustomed to it, you will soon want another - the sooner the better." The strongest man if encouraged may soon accustom himself to the methods of an invalid; he may train himself to totter, or to be fed with a spoon.[53]

The incubus of Socialism caused the 'Coroneted Socialist' to jettison much of his progressive cargo to avoid what he perceived to be the far more dangerous shipwreck.

In seeking decentralisation and devolution, Rosebery gave practical effect to his political philosophy. In Scotland, he achieved very tangible results, but his broad vision for the Empire remained largely unfulfilled. He adhered to a creed which, by the turn of the century, had become outdated. Many agreed with his campaign for efficiency, but few shared his larger vision for Britain and the Empire. Rosebery maintained a seemingly contradictory position of urging Imperial Federation and devolution. However, he argued that by giving greater autonomy to the constituent nations, the cords which united the empire would be strengthened rather than weakened. However, other ideologies were gaining primacy as Rosebery remained in exile, and the foundation on which Rosebery constructed his Imperial ideal was giving way.

The Monarchy

> [The Golden Jubilee] was worthy of Your Majesty and of the Empire: all has tended to strengthen and to deepen the foundation of a monarchy which overshadows the Globe, and represents the union and aspirations of three hundred millions of human beings.

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[53] Rosebery, "Address to the University of Glasgow," June 12, 1908, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. ii, p. 149.

Rosebery to the Queen, 1887[54]

Rosebery was a tireless supporter of the monarchy as an effective and emotive symbol to unify a disparate Empire. In 1876, Rosebery opposed Disraeli's attempt to make the Queen the Empress of India, because the measure introduced an unhealthy division. Instead of being Queen of all, Victoria was Queen to some and Empress to others. He expressed his fear publicly in the Lords, "that by touching the outward form of the monarchy they might in some sort touch its inner spirit and dignity."[55] Rosebery was consistently a consistent staunch ally of the extended Royal Family and he maintained close and continuous relations with the Queen.

Rosebery protected the Queen's interests and reputation. During the controversy over the Duke of Coburg's debts in 1893, Rosebery expressed his feelings to Gladstone, "We live under a monarchy, which gives us many real advantages. A republic has others of a different kind. But it is deplorable to live under a monarchy and make a football of it, and rejoice in starving it."[56] His protective attitude also caused him to take umbrage at the anti-royalist remarks of the Irish Nationalist leaders and sour him to their cause.[57]

After the deaths of Queen Victoria and King Edward VII, Rosebery was at least privately concerned about the future of the monarchy. On April 25, 1918, he concluded that the monarchy was imperilled, and wrote an extensive memorandum,

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[54] RP, MS 10200, f. 63, Rosebery to the Queen [copy] dated July 7, 1887.

[55] Hansard, 3rd ser., vol. 228, cols. 1081 - 2, April 3, 1876.

[56] GP, Add MS 44290, f. 199, Rosebery to Gladstone dated November 5, 1893.

[57] For example, on June 21, 1897, Dillon opposed an address to the Queen on her second Jubilee. He remarked, "after sixty years of degradation, Ireland was asked to kiss the hand that had chained her," in Henry W. Lucy, A Diary of the Unionist Parliament, 1895 - 1900 (London, 1901), p. 158.

> The financial burden after the war will be so overwhelming that there will be a number of reckless extremists who will work on that aspect of the monarchy and point to the economy involved by its abolition, and work perhaps with success. ... On the other side there is the basic fact that the empire would disappear with the monarchy. That is its real strength.[58]

Rosebery viewed the Monarchy and the Empire as inextricably linked. He then expressed (at length) his fears for the future,

> There are probably many of the Bolshevik anarchists in this country, ignorant knaves or fools, bent on plunder. It is therefore necessary to lose no opportunity of popularising the monarchy ... London is a kingdom in population, a population containing the most dangerous elements. When do they ever see the King? How many Londoners have seen him? They see a flag flying over Buckingham Palace, but nothing more; and the flag betraying his presence, his invisible presence only increases the irritation ... The K and Queen live in monastic solitude in the midst of London, advertising so to speak their aloofness. I cannot exaggerate my alarm at this state of things; it seems to me to be directly promoting Revolution. Greater London comprises some 8 or 10 millions of human beings, comprising all the elements of anarchy. You and I[59] can remember the outbreak of Feb 1886, (led by the bye by John Burns!) how easily they overran the West-End, and the hideous group which pervaded that quarter for some days afterwards. Were there a spirit of revolt, depend upon it, it would first be manifest in this enormous crowded population. Should it occur to what could we look? What feeling would there be to oppose it? The protection of property? That, whatever it be worth against an overwhelming mob, would be equally strong under a Republic. But the monarchy? Who would stand forth on its behalf? The guards & the police no doubt, but they would have their hands full. What enthusiasm of popular loyalty would there be on behalf of the Sovereigns? What could there be? Loyalty is not a abstract but a concrete sentiment, it requires something visible and tangible to cling to. 99 out of every 100 Londoners would say "What is the King to us? ... He don't care about us and we don't care about him; let him look

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[58] Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 31, memorandum, "Monarchy" dated April 25, 1918 prepared by Rosebery for his own use.

[59] There is nothing to indicate to whom Rosebery wrote this memorandum but it could be John Morley. It does not appear that this memorandum was ever sent or acted upon.

after himself."[60]

A large element of this memorandum is a (somewhat irrational) fear of the common people which Rosebery previously extolled. The dangers of mobs or of Bolsheviks was a startling vision to a laird whose vast wealth was tied up in property and securities. Apart from this self-centred fear, there is an important realisation of the value of symbols in defining and maintaining nationhood.

The nation need identifiable reminders of its origin and unity, and the vast British Empire required a vibrant monarchy to unite the colonies, the dominions and the nations of the United Kingdom. Rosebery's close relations with the three Sovereigns of his lifetime and his steadfast support for the monarchy are consistent with his overall political philosophy. In Rosebery's view, the monarchy was essential to the stability and well-being of the Empire. The monarchy and the Empire were linked for good or ill. It provided one of the few symbols which could provide such unity, but by 1918 the Empire itself was crumbling and Rosebery was in obscurity.

Conclusion

The various elements of Rosebery's political ideology have been discussed to understand his actions and utterances more fully. He was subject to variations in temperament and even reason, but his actions were not merely actuated by whim. Rosebery certainly presented ideas, but did he have anything substantial to say? Rosebery considered the government, constitution and the Empire closely and critically and he had the intellectual ability to propose a sophisticated and detailed solution. At the base of this

[60] Rosebery Literary MSS, Acc 8365, vol. 31, memorandum, "Monarchy" dated April 25, 1918.

ideology is his strong imperialism which was fuelled and undergirded by his love for his native Scotland. He sought to better integrate the Empire and its constituent nations by reforming the Lords, unburdening Westminster and supporting the monarchy.

The cogency and plausibility of Rosebery's political ideology reached its apex during the period 1883 - 1890. Rosebery was young, powerful and active, the Empire glittered as if it was gold - a seemingly limitless blessing with a reasonable cost. Rosebery was at his best when he was second-in-command to Gladstone. He had power, but also had the ability to apply his energies where he wanted. As Prime Minister, Rosebery had to deal with issues that did not interest him and his leadership proved to be abysmal. By the 1890s, personal tragedy, political division, and imperial warfare shattered Rosebery's illusions and darkened his vision. The events of the early 20th century made his Liberal Imperialist agenda as impractical as his return to politics was implausible. Rosebery became a political relic preaching an ancient creed to a nation which adhered to a different confession.

8. Conclusions and Assessments

Oh thou whom chance leads to this nameless stone,
From that proud country which was once mine own,
By those white cliffs I never more must see,
By that dear language which I spake like thee,
Forget all feuds and shed one English tear
O'er English dust. A broken heart lies here.
Macaulay, Epitaph on a Jacobite (1845)[1]

Though Rosebery was very much at the centre of national life a century ago, he is now almost completely absent from the nation's history. The memory of the Jacobite lingers through literature, folklore and film, while Rosebery's epitaph remains obscure. He realised that,

> Nations have silent stubborn memories. The fires of Smithfield[2] have left in England embers that still smoulder. Ireland has remembered much which it would be for her own happiness to forget. The Scots are still Jacobites at heart.[3]

Yet, Rosebery's legacy was not so stubborn. For him, what remains is little more than an entry in the Dictionary of National Biography and passing references in works on modern Scottish history. Rosebery realised that fame was no guarantee against historical oblivion. In concluding his monograph on Lord Randolph Churchill, he asked "What is his place in history? Only history can say. That muse has a sieve of her own; much that was reputed

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[1] Macaulay presented this poem to his close friend and fellow historian, Lord Mahon (Rosebery's Uncle who later became the 5th Earl Stanhope). In response to a letter which has not survived, George Otto Trevelyan (Macaulay's nephew) wrote to Rosebery (Mahon's nephew), "you say you admire the 'Epitaph on a Jacobite' but that you cannot go so far as to say it is the best of Macaulay." RP, MS 10063, f. 244, Trevelyan to Rosebery dated January 20, 1927.

[2] An area in northwest London which was used for execution during the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. During 'Bloody Mary's' reign, 47 Protestant martyrs were burned at the stake at Smithfield.

[3] Rosebery, Napoleon: The Last Phase, p. 222.

corn is found to be chaff, and unexpected treasures of grain are found in it."[4] Yet, obscurity does not imply insignificance. For Scotland, Rosebery was an important symbolic figure, just as Parnell was a symbol for Ireland.

Rosebery cast a long shadow. He stimulated Scottish politics, culture and literature. Consider the great Scottish writers of the Imperial age: Stevenson, Barrie, Buchan and Conan Doyle. Each offered a combination of nationalism and imperialism on inflamed romantic terms. They created great fiction - great boys' fiction - which fuelled the imagination of the nation. Despite their political differences, each was influenced by Rosebery. Buchan, Rosebery's disciple in later life, republished Rosebery's speeches - gems that were in danger of obscurity. Barrie, who in his youth was tempted to fling a clod of turf at Rosebery, later described the noble Lord as the uncrowned King of Scotland. From his Samoan exile, Stevenson corresponded with Rosebery on colonial issues and inscribed a copy of Catriona for Rosebery's children.[5] Conan Doyle considered Rosebery to be the standard for sane imperialism.[6] Rosebery offered the attraction of a working aristocracy. In an age when most of the nobility sought the fealty of their vassals only in rents, Rosebery was a fighting clan chieftain - fighting to preserve and insure Scotland's distinct heritage and in so doing earning the affection and loyalty of the Scottish people.

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[4] Rosebery, Lord Randolph Churchill, in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, p. 366.

[5] For Stevenson's correspondence on Samoa, see Bradford A. Booth and Ernest Mehew (eds.), The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson (8 vols., New Haven, Connecticut, 1994 - 95), vol. viii, pp. 20 - 22 and 230 - 32, Stevenson to Rosebery dated January 30, 1893 and January 2, 1894. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Stevenson's current fame is in no small part due to Rosebery's efforts on his behalf.

[6] For example, Conan Doyle opposed the celebration of Trafalgar Day as it tended to irritate the French. He proposed celebrating Nelson, the great hero, rather than the great victory. In a letter to The Times on October 23, 1897, Conan Doyle expanded, "I still feel that the great words of Lord Rosebery at Stirling when he said that Britain had so many victories, she had neither the time nor the memory to celebrate them, strike a higher and a nobler note." John Michael Gibson and Richard Lancelyn Green (eds.), Letters to the Press: The Unknown Conan Doyle (London, 1986), p. 51.

Rosebery's career was not futile nor is the study of his life pointless. Like tarnished silver, a little polishing restores the old lustre. Scotland was better because of Rosebery and we are better for knowing him. Undoubtedly, there was an element of pathos in a life of a man who was destined for greatness yet never quite fulfilled his promise. Nevertheless, he elevated Scotland and the Empire within the political agenda. He did not win the prize but he did up the stakes.

In reviewing his life, I echo Rosebery's own lament in his monograph on Chatham,

> It is, of course, easy to record his course as a statesman, his speeches, his triumphs, his achievements; and these narratives will be called biographies. But will they ever reveal the real man?[7]

A chronology is insufficient, but it is difficult to glimpse the real man over these intervening years. However, there is now sufficient distance from the original events to consider Rosebery's influence on Scotland. In 1897, Rosebery remarked that a passage of time was essential to gaining a fair perspective of his age,

> Of the history of the present time we know nothing whatever. ... It will be a century hence before the large and serene gaze of history can focus itself sufficiently on the events of the day to be able to place these in their true relation and their true proportion.[8]

That century has almost passed. Rosebery's fame has faded, while Scottish nationalism has grown more vocal and vibrant.

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[7] Rosebery, Chatham: His Early Life and Connections, p. x.

[8] Rosebery, "Address to the Annual Meeting of Scottish Historical Society," November 23, 1897, in Scottish Historical Society, Ser. 1, vol. 28 (Edinburgh, 1898), Appendix, p. 9.

Rosebery's contribution to his nation's history is significant, but more importantly he gave Scotland a sense of mission. In commerce, the military, the church and the civil service, the Scots were a going people. Rosebery capitalised on this fact and he challenged his fellow Scots to face the greatest challenge to date: to populate, administer and defend the Empire. Rosebery offered the Scots way to reconcile their Scottishness within Britain and the Empire without compromising their distinct identity. Devising schemes to federate the Empire or to reform the constitution was admirable, but a time of reckoning was inevitable. Peter Pan - a boy who never grew old - was only possible in fiction. Rosebery grew old and as the years passed he failed to deliver on his promises.

The current perception of Rosebery is one which he helped to create: a patrician who was compelled for a season to soil his hands in the common commerce of politics. During his retirement, he penned a memorandum which many have taken to be the summation of his career,

> The secret of my life, which seems to me sufficiently obvious, is that I always detested politics. I had been landed in them accidentally by the Midlothian Election, which was nothing but a chivalrous adventure. When I found myself in this evil smelling bog I was always trying to extricate myself. That is the secret of what people used to call my lost opportunities, and so forth. If you will look over my life you will see that it is quite obvious. But nothing is so obvious as the thing which one does not wish to see.
>
> I saw in some book the other day that I was described as a failure, and this led me into a train of thought which whirled me from myself. But let me say at once that according to the usual apprehension of the word the definition is sufficiently accurate. What! a man who has been more or less in public life for a quarter of a century, who has never enjoyed an instant of power, and has now been long in seclusion without a follower and almost forgotten, what can be a greater failure?[9]

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[9] Undated memorandum written during Rosebery's retirement, quoted in Rhodes James, p. 474. I have been unable to locate this memorandum in the Rosebery Papers so I rely on Rhodes James's citation.

Though intriguing, this self-pitying analysis does not provide the final word on Rosebery's career. For example, it does not explain his active and even aggressive efforts to advance the cause of Scotland and the Empire which went far beyond the efforts of a man who was simply trying to 'extricate' himself from the mire of politics.

Had events fallen differently, Rosebery's fame would now stand far higher. In her final and most dramatic assault on the constitution, Queen Victoria promoted Rosebery from an office which he enjoyed to an office for which he was eminently ill-suited. If the Queen had allowed Gladstone to choose his successor, Spencer could have become Prime Minister and Rosebery would have remained at the Foreign Office as a counter-balance to Harcourt as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Rosebery could then have risen to head the party at a more propitious time. This did not happen. History details Rosebery's pitiful fifteen-month premiership which was followed almost immediately by a thirty-year retirement. A career which seemed sublime soon became ridiculous.

After close consideration of Rosebery's career, many questions continue to linger. For example, how can the fame which he enjoyed less than a century ago be reconciled with the obscurity which now shrouds him? Though questions remain, much has been learned. By examining his career in the 1870s and early 1880s, light has been shed on the inner workings of Scottish politics demonstrating the variety of ways in which Scottish national sentiment was manifested. Studying Rosebery and Scotland in tandem has provided a fruitful field of inquiry and lays the foundation for further study into these crucial decades.

Due largely to Rosebery's direct intervention or indirect influence, Scotland secured tangible and even dramatic advances. In Whitehall and Westminster, Scotland was better represented and more powerful than ever.

The 1880s and 1890s also witnessed a national renaissance of sorts whereby Scotland's culture was preserved and proclaimed through such means as the Scottish National Portrait Gallery and the Scottish History Society. National forces grew in strength, but, as seen in the disestablishment movement, nationalism did not always unite Scotland. At the high water mark of the Empire, Scotland was expressing its own distinct identity. Political movements, such as the drive for Scottish Home Rule or Home Rule All Round, tended to be spasmodic, but were nonetheless indicative of a growing national awareness. It was not by chance that these movements coincided with Rosebery's prime. Unlike any other in his generation, Rosebery galvanised a nation and a people.

Did Rosebery have an unknown influence? The influence is not really unknown but rather unrecorded: his voice. He produced gorgeously learned rhetoric for public consumption. Combined with his charm and intelligence, his powerful voice made him a great force in Scotland. Rosebery's hold on his audience can now only be guessed. It was this combination of talents which distinguished Rosebery and set him apart. Aytoun's epitaph on Dundee is appropriate, "It would be difficult to point out another instance in which the maintenance of a great cause depended solely upon the life of a single man."[10] There was a pervasive feeling that Rosebery and Scotland were intimately linked. One of the highest possible tributes to a Scot's popularity occurred in 1899, when the Scottish football team played at Celtic Park wearing primrose and pink, Rosebery's racing colours.[11] Rosebery's life was intertwined with Scotland while his death created a great void. The obituary in The Scotsman lamented, "A star of the first magnitude has gone out in the Scottish firmament."[12] That light has not been replaced.

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[10] William Edmondstoune Aytoun, Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers (Edinburgh, 1863), p. 81.

[11] Jane T. Stoddart, The Earl of Rosebery, K. G. (London, 1900), p. 153.

[12] The Scotsman, May 22, 1929, p. 12.

Yet, there was a limit to Rosebery's influence. He was not a statesman of the first mark. His summary of Windham's life, penned in 1913, applies to his own career,

> In life he was brilliant and successful. In oratory, in Parliament, in society, he was almost supreme. But he can scarcely be said to survive. He left no stamp, no school, no work. To those, however, who care to disinter his memory he displays character and qualities of excellence, rare at times, rarest in these.[13]

The study of Rosebery's career is rewarding not simply for his achievements, but because it illuminates an intriguing character in a fascinating age.

Rosebery embodied many dreams, the hope of youth for prosperity, the hope of Scotland for advancement and the hope of the Empire for consolidation. When he waged the Aberdeen and Edinburgh Rectorial contests in the early 1880s, Rosebery was young and his constituents were young. He symbolised the promise to which all aspired. He spoke to a rising generation of Scots as a rising Scot. He elevated his audience and his nation to consider their high Imperial calling. He gave the Scots a sense not only of partnership within the Empire but almost of ownership. Though his vision never reached fruition, his influence on a generation of Scots cannot be easily minimised, nor fully understood. As Scotland's uncrowned King he had no successor, no one to keep his memory alive. As his generation passed, his memory quickly faded.

The more challenging - but intriguing - question is, what would Scotland have been like without Rosebery? He was a symbol - an Imperial aristocratic symbol - of Scottish nationhood. Parnell is the only comparable figure, but Parnell was destroyed. Rosebery gave the aristocracy a validity

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[13] Rosebery, "William Windham," in Buchan (ed.), Miscellanies, vol. i, p. 159.

within the Scottish social order: a validity which was seen as late as 1963 when the former 14th Earl of Home became Prime Minster. It is arguable that if Rosebery had not existed, Scottish nationalism would have been less advanced but more class-conscious and hence more divisive. The career and memory of Rosebery instilled within Scottish nationalism a strong degree of social conservatism even in deference to an anglicised aristocracy. Therefore, almost paradoxically, Rosebery strengthened, focused and blunted Scottish nationalism. Without him, Scotland doubtlessly would have been poorer in politics, culture and literature. His life was a blessing to his nation, but like most blessings it was mixed.

As I conclude, I understand how challenging it is to enliven the memory of one so eloquent who now lies silent. He is a distant but intriguing memory. I can understand Byron's lament over the fate of Greece which he expressed in "Don Juan." His words serve as an epitaph to this work and to my effort to chart the interrelationship between Rosebery and Scotland. The closeness of this relationship was highlighted by the void created when Rosebery's voice was heard no more,

And where are they? And where art thou,
My country? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now -
The heroic bosom beats no more
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine?[14]

[14] Byron's hymn, 'The Isles of Greece ...' in "Don Juan," Canto III (1821), lines 713 - 8, in McGann (ed.), Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works, vol. v., pp. 189 - 90.

Appendix 1. Biographical Notes

I have sketched the lives of those most closely associated with Rosebery and Scottish Nationalism. Some individuals, I realise, could be listed under several categories. Unfortunately, many figures who were instrumental in Scottish politics on the local and regional level are now virtually lost to history.

Plan of Appendix:

A. Rosebery's Close Friends

James Campbell Hamilton, 7th Earl of Aberdeen
Ishbel Maria, Countess of Aberdeen
Herbert Bismarck
Reginald Brett
John Buchan
Lord Randolph Churchill
Mary Gladstone
Arthur Godley
Edward Hamilton
Sir George Murray
Robert Perks
Canon William Rogers

B. Members of the Rosebery Machine

Charles Cooper
James Donaldson
William Dunbar
Holmes Ivory
Ronald Munro-Ferguson
James Patten MacDougall
John James Reid
Ralph Richardson

C. Scottish Politicians

William Patrick Adam
John Blair Balfour
Gavin, 7th Earl of Breadalbane
Victor Alexander, 9th Earl of Elgin
Alexander William George, 6th Earl of Fife
Sir William Gibson-Craig
Schomberg Henry, 9th Marquess of Lothian
John Hamilton, 10th Earl of Stair

John Webster

D. Scottish Nationalists

Sir Archibald Alison
William Edmondstoune Aytoun
James Begg
John Stuart Blackie
John Patrick, 3rd Marquess of Bute
Gavin Brown Clark
Patrick Dove
Archibald William, 13th Earl of Eglinton
Sir Thomas Gladstone of Fasque
James Grant
Duncan McLaren
Hugh Miller
William Mitchell
Theodore Napier
Sir Joseph Noel Paton
John Romans
Sir James Young Simpson
Charles Waddie

E. Irish and Welsh Leaders

Joseph Biggar
Isaac Butt
Michael Davitt
John Dillon
Thomas Edward Ellis
Timothy Healy
David Lloyd George
Justin MacCarthy
William O'Brien
T. P. O'Connor
Charles Stewart Parnell
John Redmond
Stuart Rendel
Thomas Sexton
David Alfred Thomas

F. Prime Ministers and Cabinet Ministers

George Douglas, 8th Duke of Argyll
Herbert Henry Asquith
Arthur James Balfour

James Bryce
Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman
Joseph Chamberlain
Robert Offley Ashburton, 1st Marquess of Crewe
Sir Richard Cross
Sir Charles Dilke
Benjamin Disraeli
William Edward Forster
Sir Henry Fowler
William Ewart Gladstone
George, 2nd Earl Granville
Sir Edward Grey
Richard Burdon Haldane
Lewis Harcourt
Sir William Harcourt
Spencer Compton, Marquess of Hartington, 8th Duke of Devonshire
John, 1st Earl of Kimberley
Henry Charles Keith, 5th Marquess of Lansdowne
Edward Marjoribanks
John Morley
Charles Henry, 6th Duke of Richmond and Gordon
Robert Arthur Talbot, 3rd Marquess of Salisbury
John, 5th Earl Spencer
George Otto Trevelyan

A. ROSEBERY'S CLOSE FRIENDS

Aberdeen, James Campbell Hamilton Gordon (1847 - 1934), 7th Earl of, began his career as a Conservative but broke with Beaconsfield over foreign affairs. In 1878, he planned to contest the Aberdeen Rectorial Election on non-political grounds but withdrew when the Liberal students selected Lord Rosebery. He was the very popular Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1886 and 1905 - 15) and Governor General of Canada (1893 - 98). He was High Commissioner to the Church of Scotland (1881 - 85 and 1915). He was created Marquess of Aberdeen and Temair in 1916.

Aberdeen, Ishbel Maria Marjoribanks Gordon (1857 - 1939), Countess of, was Edward Marjoribanks' sister. She was President of the International Council of Women (1893 - 1936) and received the Freedom of Limerick (1894) and Edinburgh (1928). She had a perceptive mind and was politically astute.

Bismarck-Schonhausen, Herbert von (1849 - 1904), was the son of Otto von Bismarck, the great Chancellor of the German Empire. He and Rosebery were close friends after they met in 1882. Bismarck served as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs (1885) and Foreign Secretary (1886 - 90) in Germany. He fell from office when his father was dismissed from power in 1890. In 1898, he succeeded to his father's title of Prince Bismarck. Rosebery was the Godfather to Bismarck's son and heir, Count Otto Christian Archibald Bismarck.

Brett, Reginald Baliol (1852 - 1930), was a contemporary of Rosebery's at Eton. He was private secretary to Lord Hartington (1877 - 85) and a Liberal MP for Penryn and Falmouth (1880 - 85). He was Secretary for the Office of Works (1895 - 1902) and from 1902, he played a significant role in the formulation of defence policy sitting as a member of the Committee of Imperial Defence (1905 - 18). He succeeded his father as 2nd Viscount Esher in 1899.

Buchan, John (1875 - 1940), is most remembered as a writer of fiction and history. He wrote Scottish historical novels (such as John Burnet of Barns (1898) and Witch Wood (1927)) and Scottish contemporary novels (The Thirty-Nine Steps and John Macnab (1925)). His final novel, Sick Heart River (1941) was set in Canada. In politics, he was Private Secretary to Lord Milner, the Lord High Commissioner for South Africa (1901 - 03), a Conservative MP for the Scottish Universities (1927 - 35) and - after being created Baron Tweedsmuir - Governor General of Canada (1935 - 40). In Scotland, he succeed Rosebery as President of the Scottish History Society (1929 - 33) and served as Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh (1937 - 40). He was a close friend and frequent visitor in Rosebery's later years and he compiled and edited Miscellanies: Literary and Historical of Lord Rosebery(1921).

Churchill, Lord Randolph Henry Spencer (1849 - 1895), was Rosebery's

contemporary and close friend at Eton and Oxford. In 1874, he married Miss Jennie Jerome, a beautiful and wealthy member of a New York family. He was a Conservative MP for Woodstock (1874 - 85) and Paddington South (1885 - 95). He was Secretary for India (1885 - January 1886) and Chancellor of the Exchequer from August 1886 until his resignation on December 22, 1886. Thereafter, his physical and mental health declined sharply. He was the subject of a brief monograph by Lord Rosebery and a full biography by his son Winston.

Gladstone [later Drew], Mary (1847 - 1927), was the daughter of W. E. Gladstone. She was Rosebery's close friend and confidant from the first Midlothian Campaign to her death.

Godley, Arthur (1847 - 1932), was a contemporary of Rosebery's at Oxford (Balliol) and remained on close terms with Rosebery throughout his life. As one of Gladstone's private secretaries (1872 - 74) and later his principal private secretary (1880 - 82), Godley developed a close friendship with Gladstone. He served as a Commissioner of the Inland Revenue (1882 - 83) and was appointed Permanent Under-Secretary for the India Office (1883 - 1909). In 1909, he was created Baron Kilbracken.

Hamilton, Edward Walter (1847 - 1908), was a contemporary of Rosebery's at Eton and Christ Church. He served as private Secretary to Robert Lowe, Chancellor of the Exchequer (1872 - 73), and to Gladstone (1873 - 74 and 1880 - 85). He joined the Treasury in 1885, became Assistant Secretary in 1894, and concluded his career as a Joint Permanent Financial Secretary (1902 - 7). He maintained a full and reliable diary (1880 - 1906) and he was Rosebery's oldest and closest friend.

Murray, Sir George Herbert (1849 - 1936), was a contemporary of Rosebery's at Christ Church, Oxford. He served as private secretary to Gladstone (1892 - 94) and Rosebery (1894 - 95). He was Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue (1897 - 99), Secretary to the Post Office (1899 - 1903) and Permanent Secretary to the Treasury (1903 - 11). According to Crewe [vol. ii, p. 654], Murray enjoyed Rosebery's personal confidence to an extent to which no one else had since the death of Edward Hamilton.

Perks, Robert William (1849 - 1934), was a Liberal MP for Lough (1892 - 1910). A Wesleyan, he founded the Nonconformist Parliamentary Committee in 1898. He strongly supported Rosebery's Irish policy repudiating the demand for an independent Irish Parliament. He was the Treasurer of the Liberal League (1902 - 10), and one of its chief organisers.

Rogers, Canon William (1819 - 1896), was Rector of Bishopsgate and Prebendary of St Paul's Cathedral, London. His friendship with Rosebery gave the statesman an insight into the poverty of London's East End. Rogers

was an ardent social reformer seeking improved education, sanitation and amusement for the poor. He was known for his dismissal of doctrine by the phrase, 'hang theology,' - a sentiment which Rosebery no doubt shared. Rosebery wrote at least two sermons which Rogers preached.

B. MEMBERS OF THE ROSEBERY MACHINE

Cooper, Charles Alfred (1829 - 1916), was born in England and raised as a Roman Catholic. He was received into the Church of Scotland and became a vocal opponent of disestablishment. He commenced his journalistic career with the Star and from 1868 he was The Scotsman's London reporter. In this capacity, he was instrumental in opening the gallery of the House of Commons to non-London newspapers. On the death of Alexander Russel in 1876, Cooper became the joint editor (with Robert Wallace) of The Scotsman (1876 - 80) and later became its sole editor (1880 - 1906). He was a frequent correspondent with Rosebery (1881 - 86). Home Rule changed Cooper from a committed Gladstonian until 1885 to an ardent Liberal Unionist.

Donaldson, Sir James (1831 - 1915), was Principal of the Royal High School, Edinburgh (1866 - 81) before being named Professor of Humanity at Aberdeen University (1881 - 86). He was the honorary president of the Edinburgh University Philosophical Society (1878 - 79), a connection which helped him secure Rosebery's election as Rector at Edinburgh in 1880. Donaldson was a frequent correspondent with Rosebery (1879 - 96). He became Principal of St Andrews University in 1890. In 1913, he wrote a pamphlet, Home Rule and Scottish Education, but his most famous work was his 3 volume, A Critical History of Christian Literature and Doctrine from the Death of the Apostles to the Nicene Council (1864 - 66).

Dunbar, Sir William Cospatrick (1844 - 1931), was private secretary to the Under-Secretary in the Home Office (1876 - 85), Assistant Under-Secretary for Scotland (1885 - 1902) and Registrar General for England (1902 - 9). He was knighted in 1887 and succeeded to the Baronetcy of Mocrum in 1904. For Rosebery, Dunbar was a close and loyal contact in the Home Office and later in the new Scottish Office.

Ivory, Holmes (1851 - 1914), was the Honorary Secretary of the Scottish Liberal Club since its foundation in 1880 and acted as Gladstone's agent in Midlothian (1882 - 84). He was on close terms with both Gladstone and Rosebery. A Writer to the Signet, he later founded the law firm of Peddie Ivory. Ivory's papers do not appear to have survived, though some of his outgoing letters are preserved in the Gladstone and Rosebery Papers.

Munro-Ferguson, Ronald Craufurd (1860 - 1934), owned large estates in Fife and Ross-shire. He was MP for Ross and Cromarty (1884 - 85) and Leith (1886 - 1914). A committed Liberal Imperialist, he was closely associated with

Rosebery, and was his private secretary at the Foreign Office (1886 and 1892 - 94). He was Scottish Liberal Whip (1894 - 1900) until he resigned to support Rosebery in his anticipated return to politics. He was Governor of Australia (1914 - 20) and Secretary for Scotland (1922 - 24). He was created Viscount Novar in 1920.

Patten MacDougall, James (1849 - 1919), was a contemporary of Rosebery's at Christ Church, Oxford. He was the Secretary of the East and North of Scotland Liberal Association and he was active in securing the formation of the Scottish Liberal Association in 1881. He was legal secretary to the Lord Advocate (1886 and 1892 - 94). In 1894, he applied to Rosebery for the Chairmanship of the Fishery Board, but was appointed Vice-President and Chairman of the Local Government Board for Scotland. He was later Keeper of the Records of Scotland. He was a tireless supporter, correspondent (1881 - 94) and sycophant of Lord Rosebery.

Reid, John James (1844 - 1889), was an advocate and a secretary of the Midlothian Liberal Association. He published Gladstone's Scottish speeches in 1879 and was closely involved in planning and executing the 1879 and 1880 Midlothian Campaigns. He contributed significantly to the party's victory at the 1880 General Election. In recognition of his services to the party, he was appointed Advocate-Depute in 1880.

Richardson, Ralph (1845 - 1933), was a secretary of the Midlothian Liberal Association who tirelessly collected polls and analysed the constituency (1878 - 80) to convince Gladstone to stand and later to track the prospects of his candidacy. He was Rosebery's frequent correspondent during the late 1870s and early 1880s.

C. SCOTTISH POLITICIANS

Adam, Sir William Patrick (1823 - 1881), was a significant force in Scottish politics. He was a Liberal MP for Clackmannan and Kinross (1859 - 1880) and served as a Lord of the Treasury (1865 - 66) and Chief Commissioner of Works and Buildings and Paymaster General (1873 - 74, and 1880). He was Chief Liberal Whip (1874 - 80) during Gladstone's 'retirement.' Adam was an astute politician and was widely popular. In 1879 - 80, he and Rosebery co-organised the Midlothian Campaign. After the Liberal victory, in recognition of his service to the party, Gladstone appointed him Governor of Madras. He died shortly after arriving in India.

Balfour, John Blair (1837 - 1905), was Solicitor General for Scotland (1880 - 1) and Lord Advocate (1881 - 85, 1886, and 1892 - 95). He was a Liberal MP for Clackmannan and Kinross (1880 - 99) and he was a strong defender of the Established Church of Scotland. He was created Baron Kinross in 1902.

Breadalbane, Gavin Campbell (1851 - 1922), 7th Earl of, owned over 430,000 acres in Perthshire and Argyllshire. In 1885, he was created the Marquess of Breadalbane. After 1886, he remained loyal to Gladstone and served as Vice-President of the Scottish Liberal Association.

Elgin, Victor Alexander Bruce (1849 - 1917), 9th Earl of, was Rosebery's contemporary at Eton and Oxford. He served as First Commissioner of Works (1886), Viceroy of India (1894 - 99), and Colonial Secretary (1905 - 08). He was an active opponent of radicalism and faddism in the Scottish Liberal Association and he was a close ally of Rosebery.

Fife, Alexander William George Duff (1849 - 1912), 6th Earl of, was born in Scotland but lived mainly in England. In 1889, he married Princess Louise, eldest daughter of his close friend the Prince of Wales, and he was created the Duke of Fife. A banker, he had extensive land holdings in Scotland (135,000 acres in 1883) and an annual income in excess of £80,000 (£4,000,000 today).

Gibson-Craig, Sir William (1797 - 1878), was the son of Sir James Gibson Craig. He was a Whig MP for Midlothian (1837 - 41) and Edinburgh (1841 - 52). He supported the Maynooth Grant, but managed to retain his Edinburgh seat at the 1847 General Election. He was Lord Clerk of HM Rolls and Registers in Scotland (1862 - 78). Gibson-Craig was a member of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1834 and he supported the controversial Veto Act. He was largely responsible for the establishment of the National Gallery of Scotland and he published an index to the Acts of the Scottish Parliament, the records of the Privy Council of Scotland and other documents held at the Scottish Record Office. His obituary [The Scotsman, March 13, 1878, p. 7] noted "for nearly half a century has the name of the distinguished Baronet been intimately associated with Scottish affairs."

Lothian, Schomberg Henry Kerr (1833 - 1900), 9th Marquess of, presided over the January, 1884 Convention of Royal Burghs which called for the restoration of the Scottish Secretaryship - an office which he later held (1887 - 92). A Conservative in politics, he was elected Lord Rector of the University of Edinburgh in 1887.

Stair, John Hamilton Dalrymple (1819 - 1903), 10th Earl of, was a Liberal MP for Wigtonshire (1841 - 56). He succeeded his father in 1864. He was Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (1869 - 71) and Governor of the Bank of Scotland (1870 - 1903). He actively opposed Gladstone's Home Rule scheme in 1886. As Chancellor of Glasgow University (1884 - 1903), he cast the deciding vote in the 1887 Rectorial contest for Lord Lytton at the expense of Lord Rosebery.

Webster, John (1810 - 1891), was Lord Provost of Aberdeen (1856 - 59) and a member of the Aberdeen University Court from 1861. He was a Radical

MP for Aberdeen (1880 - 85) and president of the Aberdeen University and Aberdeen City Liberal Associations (1877 - 86). After 1886, however, he was a Liberal Unionist.

D. SCOTTISH NATIONALISTS

Alison, Sir Archibald (1792 - 1867), a historian and lawyer, was appointed Advocate-Depute in 1822 - a post which he held until 1830. He was a central figure in prosecuting the Crown's case against the famed Edinburgh murderers Burke and Hare. He was a mild Tory in politics and contributed frequently to Blackwood's Magazine. A prolific author, he wrote a 10 volume History of Europe during the French Revolution (1832 - 42) which he continued in 9 more volumes to the accession of Louis Napoleon (1852 - 59). Alison was elected Rector of Marischal College, Aberdeen (1845) and of the University of Glasgow (1851) and was created a Baronet in 1852. He was a leading member of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights in the 1850s.

Aytoun, William Edmondstoune (1818 - 1865), had a passion for ballad poetry and a sympathy for the Stuarts. He was a staff member and frequent contributor to the Tory Blackwood's Magazine. His Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers (1848) confirmed his reputation as an original poet. In 1845, Aytoun was appointed Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres at Edinburgh University where he enjoyed a great popularity. He helped raise the number of students from 30 in 1846 to more than of 1,850 in 1864. In 1862, the Tory Government appointed him sheriff of Orkney.

Begg, James (1808 - 1883), was licensed as a Minister in the Church of Scotland in 1829. In 1843, he followed Dr Chalmers into the Free Church of Scotland, and remained steadfastly hostile to any form of voluntarism. In his later years, he fought and defeated the proposed union of the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches. In the Free Church, he was criticized for standing in the way of progress. This he hailed as a compliment. An ardent social reformer, he championed the cause of the working class and helped provide quality houses for working men. He was a member of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights in the 1850s and consistently lobbied for improved legislative conditions for Scotland. In addition to works of social concern such as Pauperism and Poor Laws (1849), he wrote Scotland's Demand for Electoral Justice (1857), A Violation of the Treaty of Union (1871) and A Letter to the Right Hon. the Earl of Beaconsfield (1879). Begg was able to combine a strict ecclesiastical conservatism with social radicalism and Scottish Nationalism.

Blackie, John Stuart (1809 - 1895), was Professor of Humanity at Aberdeen University (1841 - 52) and Greek at Edinburgh University (1852 - 82) and a voluminous writer of poetry and criticism. He was a keen Scottish

Nationalist and Celticist who actively lobbied for the creation of the Chair of Celtic Studies which he founded and endowed in 1882. His concern for Scotland's national cause led him to become the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Scottish Home Rule Association (1886 - 95). His obituary [The Scotsman, March 4, 1895, pp. 7 - 8] noted "whatever were the defects of his qualities, this praise will not be withheld from him, of having been the most remarkable personality of any Scotsman of this generation."

Bute, John Patrick Crichton Stuart (1847 - 1900), the 3rd Marquess of, converted to Roman Catholicism in 1869, and was reputed to be the model for Disraeli's Lothair. A contemporary of Rosebery's at Christ Church, Oxford, he and Rosebery travelled to Russia in 1868. With extensive coal and land-holdings in Scotland and Wales, he was one of the richest men of his age. He devoted a good portion of his income and interest to antiquarian and intellectual pursuits. He owned and edited The Scottish Review (1886 - 1900). He was one of the few active Conservative Members of the Scottish Home Rule Association. He advocated the restoration of a Scottish Parliament based upon the pre-1707 model in a pamphlet, Parliament in Scotland (1889).

Clark, Dr. Gavin Brown (1846 - 1930), was a Radical Crofter MP for Caithness (1885 - 1900). In 1886, Clark became the first president of the Scottish Home Rule Association, and sponsored several bills for Scottish Home Rule and Home Rule All Round. In 1888, he was a founding member (with Keir Hardie) of the Scottish Labour Party.

Dove, Patrick E. (1815 - 1873), was a Radical member of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights who wrote and spoke on their behalf in the early 1850s. He urged the restoration of the Secretaryship for Scotland as well as a Scottish Parliament.

Eglinton, Archibald William Montgomerie (1812 - 1861), 13th Earl of, was Lord Rector of Marischal College, Aberdeen (1851 - 53) and Glasgow University (1852 - 54). A Tory in politics, he was a very popular Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1852 - 53 and 1858 - 59). According to his friend Sir Archibald Alison, Eglinton "was beyond all doubt the most popular nobleman in Scotland or perhaps the British Empire." [Alison, Some Account of My Life, vol ii, p. 338]. He was well remembered for the famous Eglinton Tournament (which cost an estimated £40,000!) where Lady Seymour was crowned 'Queen of Beauty.' He was the first and only President of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights.

Gladstone of Fasque, Sir Thomas (1804 - 1889), the elder brother of William Ewart Gladstone, was a Conservative MP for Queensborough (1830 - 32), Portarlington (1832 - 35) and Leicester (1835 - 37). He was a member of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights in the 1850s.

Grant, James (1822 - 1887), was a nationalist and a prolific author. He helped form the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights and wrote many of its pamphlets attacking heraldic inconsistencies and urging the restoration of the Secretaryship for Scotland.

McLaren, Duncan (1800 - 1886), became the first chairman of the Scottish Central Board for Vindicating the Rights of Dissenters (1834). An avowed voluntary, he consistently opposed all religious endowments. He was a Magistrate and Deputy Lieutenant of the county and city of Edinburgh from 1836, Lord Provost of Edinburgh (1851 - 54) and a Radical MP for Edinburgh (1865 - 81). He was known as 'The Member for Scotland.' In 1886, he broke with Gladstone over Home Rule.

Miller, Hugh (1802 - 56), was a self-educated geologist and man of letters. He edited the Free Church daily newspaper, The Witness (1840 - 56) which was possibly the most influential Scottish daily. He wrote poetry and works of geology and general interest. During the Ten Years' Conflict, he wrote a ferocious open Letter to Lord Brougham (1839). He wrote First Impressions of England and Its People (1847) and contended against Darwinian evolution in Footprints of the Creator (1850) and Testimony of the Rocks (1857). Overworked and unwell, he took his own life.

Mitchell, William (? - 1913), was a prolific pamphleteer for the Scottish Home Rule Association and a sharp critic of Rosebery. Mitchell's obituary [The Thistle, August, 1913] credited him and his colleagues at the Scottish Home Rule Association with coining the phrase 'Home Rule All Round.'

Napier, Theodore (ca. 1830 - ca. 1912), was the honorary secretary of the Legitimist Jacobite League of Great Britain dedicated to restoring the Stuarts to throne. He was an idiosyncratic nationalist who edited The Fiery Cross (1901 - 12), a Jacobite nationalist monthly. He laboured for Scottish Home Rule and the use of correct titles (e.g. British not English and King Edward VII/I not Edward VII).

Paton, Sir Joseph Noel (1821 - 1901), was a poet and a painter in the style of the Pre-Raphaelites. His paintings were imbued with his own love of antiquarianism, folklore, mythology, and the romantic history of Scotland. He was appointed the Queen's Limner in 1865. He was a member of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights.

Romans, John (1819? - 1910), was an active Chartist and a friend of Cobden. In the early 1850s, he joined the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights. On May 20, 1886, he and Charles Waddie formed the Scottish Home Rule Association. Romans was a devout member of the Church of Scotland and opposed disestablishment. His obituary appeared in The Fiery Cross, April, 1910.

Simpson, Professor Sir James Young (1811 - 70), was famous for his development of anaesthesia (chloroform) for use in childbirth. He founded the study of gynaecology and championed hospital reform. He held the Chair in Midwifery at the University of Edinburgh (1840 - 70) and in 1847 he became one of the Physicians to the Queen. He was a member of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights in the 1850s and was a member of the Society of Scottish Antiquaries.

Waddie, Charles (1836 - 1912), founded the publishing house of Waddie & Co., and took an active interest in Scottish National matters. As a co-founder of the Scottish Home Rule Association, he was tireless in pursuing Home Rule All Round. He was a prolific pamphleteer and poet, who tried to stir his fellow Scots to demand their own parliament. His obituary appeared in The Fiery Cross, April, 1912.

E. IRISH AND WELSH LEADERS

Biggar, Joseph Gillis (1828 - 1890), was originally a merchant from Belfast. He was MP for Cavan (1874 - 85) and West Cavan (1885 - 90). He was a vocal Irish Nationalist in favour of Irish Home Rule. He initiated the policy of obstruction in the House of Commons, which was successfully adopted by Parnell and his party.

Butt, Isaac (1813 - 1879), was a Protestant educated at Trinity College, Dublin where he founded the Dublin University Magazine (1838). A Conservative lawyer, he opposed O'Connell's repeal movement. The Famine and the Young Ireland Rising won him over to Irish Nationalism. He defended the Fenians and was President of the Amnesty Association. He was the first president of the Irish National Party. He sat as MP for Harwich (1852), Youghal (1852 - 65) and Limerick (1871 - 79). As a moderate constitutionalist, he opposed obstruction but after Parnell's rise, he soon became marginalised.

Davitt, Michael (1846 - 1906), lost his arm in a factory accident at age 11. In 1870, as a Fenian, he was sentenced to 15 years hard labour for the possession of illegal arms. After his release in 1877, he began demanding, 'The land of Ireland for the people of Ireland.' In 1879, he was a co-founder (with Parnell) of the Land League. In 1882, he was elected as an Irish Nationalist MP for Meath but was disqualified because he was on a ticket of leave. He was returned for North Meath in 1892 but was unseated on petition. He sat for North East Cork in 1893 but resigned because he was bankrupt owing to the North Meath election. He sat for South Mayo (1895 - 99) until he accepted the Chiltern Hundreds. In 1898, he and William O'Brien co-founded the United Irish League. He withdrew from Parliament in opposition to the Boer War and visited South Africa to support the Boers. He later believed that Ireland's problems could only be solved by Socialism and land nationalism. Davitt wrote Leaves From a Prison Diary (1885), The Boer Fight for Freedom

(1902) and The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland: or the Story of the Land League Revolution (1904).

Dillon, John (1851 - 1927), was a Nationalist MP for Tipperary (1880 - 83) and East Mayo (1885 - 1918). He was a leading agitator in the Land League and in 1886, he and William O'Brien commenced the 'Plan of Campaign.' After 1890, he was a prominent anti-Parnellite and led the Irish Nationalist Party (1896 - 1900). As a moderate nationalist, he opposed conscription and tried to prevent the execution of the leaders of the Easter Rising. In 1918, he again led the Irish Nationalist Party. However, at the 1918 General Election, his Party was annihilated by Sinn Fein and Dillon lost his seat to Eamon de Valera.

Ellis, Thomas Edward (1859 - 1899), was a Liberal MP for Merionethshire (1886 - 99). He was Parliamentary Charity Commissioner (1892 - 94) and Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (1894 - 95). He was the chief opposition Whip (1895 - 99). An advanced Gladstonian Liberal, Ellis supported the national demands of Wales. He was a Liberal Imperialist on close terms with Rosebery and Asquith, and an admirer of Rhodes. Ellis has become almost legendary in Welsh history.

Healy, Timothy Michael (1855 - 1931), was Parnell's secretary in 1880. During Parnell's tour of the United States and Canada (1880), Healy coined Parnell's title, 'the Uncrowned King of Ireland.' He was a Nationalist MP for Wexford (1880 - 83), Monaghan (1883 - 85), South Londonderry (1885 - 86), North Longford (1887 - 92), Louth North (1892 - 1910), and North East Cork (1911 - 18). He was a master of parliamentary tactics and his fierce debating style earned him the nickname, 'Tiger Tim.' After Parnell's divorce scandal, he became a bitter anti-Parnellite. His factious nature finally led to his expulsion from the Irish Nationalist Party in 1902. He later became the first Governor General of the Irish Free State (1922 - 28). He wrote A Word for Ireland (1886), Why Ireland is Not Free? (1898) and Letters and Leaders of My Day (1928).

Lloyd George, David (1863 - 1945), was MP for Caernarvon Burghs (1890 - 1945). In the 1890s, he was an extreme Welsh Nationalist. He opposed the Boer War and the 1902 Education Act, thus becoming a spokesman for Liberal anti-Imperialists and Nonconformists. He was President of the Board of Trade (1905 - 8), Chancellor of the Exchequer (1908 - 15), Minister of Munitions (1915 -16), Secretary for War (1916) and Prime Minister (1916 - 22). In 1945, he was created Earl Lloyd George of Dwyfor.

MacCarthy, Justin (1830 - 1912), was a journalist who wrote A History of Our Own Times (1879 - 97) as well as memoirs and works of fiction. He was an Irish Nationalist MP for Longford (1879 - 85), Longford North (1885 - 86 and 1892 - 1900) and Londonderry City (1886 - 92). He was a very popular figure

in Westminster. He led the anti-Parnellite wing of the Irish Party (1890 - 96). Blindness caused him to resign from politics in 1900. He was on close terms with both Gladstone and Rosebery.

O'Brien, William (1852 - 1928), edited the Land League journal, United Ireland and wrote the 'No Rent Manifesto.' He was a Nationalist MP for Mallow (1883 - 85), South Tyrone (1885 - 86), North East Cork (1887 - 92) and Cork City (1892 - 95, 1900 - 9 and 1910 - 18). In 1898, he founded the United Irish League which called for 'The Land for the People.' He believed that Ireland's future depended upon the cooperation of Nationalists and Unionists - this caused him and Dillon to part company. In 1910, he led seven Cork MPs in the 'All for Ireland League' with the Motto, 'Conference, Conciliation, and Consent.' He voted against the third Home Rule Bill in 1914, because he opposed partition. He wrote novels, including When We Were Boys (1890), and contemporary history such as The Olive Branch in Ireland and Its History (1910), The Irish Revolution and How it Came About (1923) and Parnell of Real Life (1926).

O'Connor, Thomas Power (1848 - 1929), was a politician and biographer who wrote Lord Beaconsfield (1879), The Parnell Movement (1886), Charles Stewart Parnell: A Memory (1891), Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (1908) and Memoirs of an Old Parliamentarian (1929). He edited the Star and later the Sun and Sunday Sun. He was an Irish Nationalist MP for Galway (1880 - 85) and the Scotland Division of Liverpool (1885 - 1929). In 1885, as President of the United Irish League in Great Britain, he helped draft the Manifesto to the Irish in England, which urged Irish voters in Britain to vote Tory. In 1902, he founded the popular literary paper, T. P.'s Weekly.

Parnell, Charles Stewart (1846 - 1891), was a Protestant landowner from Wicklow who sat as an Irish Nationalist MP for Meath (1875 - 80) and Cork City (1880 - 1891). He was the dynamic, idiosyncratic and enigmatic leader of the Irish Nationalist Party (1880 - 90). After the O'Shea divorce scandal (in which he was named a co-respondent), 26 MPs remained loyal to him. In 1891, he married his mistress Katharine O'Shea. He died after an exhausting campaign to recapture the party leadership, leaving the Irish Nationalist Party, once united and seemingly invincible, divided and in disarray.

Redmond, John Edward (1856 - 1918), was an Irish Nationalist MP for New Ross (1881 - 85),[1] North Wexford (1885 - 91) and Waterford City (1891 - 1918). On a tour of Australia and the United States (1882 - 84), he helped raise £30,000 (£1,500,000 today) for the Irish Parliamentary Party. He led the

[1] In 1885, following T.P. O'Connor's example in the Scotland division of Liverpool, Redmond contested the Kirkdale division of Liverpool but polled only 12.5% of the vote. In that same election, W. H. O'Shea, the husband of Parnell's mistress, unsuccessfully contested the Exchange division of Liverpool.

Parnellite Nationalists (1891 - 1900) and the reunited Irish Party (1900 - 18). In 1912, Redmond secured the introduction and eventual passage of the third Irish Home Rule Bill. He supported the First World War and encouraged enlistment. In 1918, Lloyd George at Redmond's request called an Irish Convention to resolve Home Rule, but Redmond died suddenly while the conference was in session.

Rendel, Stuart (1834 - 1913), was Gladstone's close friend, confidant, and frequent host. He was a Liberal MP for Montgomeryshire (1880 - 94). He was President of the North Wales Liberal Federation from 1886 and the Chairman of the Parliamentary Association of Welsh Liberals (1888 - 94) until he was created Baron Rendel.

Sexton, Thomas (1848 - 1932), was a Nationalist MP for Sligo (1880 - 85), West Belfast (1886 - 92) and North Kerry (1892 - 96) who was the party's chief spokesman on finance. His speaking skills earned him the nickname, 'Silver-tongued Sexton' from Gladstone. He was Lord Mayor of Dublin (1888 - 89). Sexton was prominent in the Land League and the Plan of Campaign and he was the chairman of the Freeman's Journal (1892 - 1912).

Thomas, David Alfred (1856 - 1918), was a Liberal MP for Merthyr Tydvil (1888 - 1910) and Cardiff (1910). He served as President of the Local Government Board (1916 - 17). He was created Baron Rhondda (1916) and Viscount Rhondda (1918).

F. PRIME MINISTERS AND CABINET MINISTERS

Argyll, George Douglas Campbell (1823 - 1900), 8th Duke of, served as Lord Privy Seal (1852 - 55, 1859 - 66, and 1880 - 81), Postmaster General (1855 - 58), and Secretary for India (1868 - 74). He resigned office in 1881 in protest to Gladstone's Irish Land Bill. He became a fierce Liberal Unionist.

Asquith, Herbert Henry (1852 - 1928), was MP for East Fife (1886 - 1918) and Paisley (1920 - 24). He was Home Secretary (1892 - 95), Chancellor of the Exchequer (1905 - 08), Prime Minister (1908 - 16) and Secretary of War (1914). A Vice-president of Rosebery's Liberal League (1902 - 10), he was the first Liberal Imperialist to join Campbell-Bannerman's Government and after CB's death he led the Liberal Party (1908 - 26). In 1925, he was created Earl of Oxford and Asquith.

Balfour, Arthur James (1848 - 1930), was a contemporary of Rosebery's at Eton. He was a Conservative MP for Hertford (1874 - 85), Manchester East (1885 - 1906), and the City of London (1906 - 12). He was Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh (1891 - 1930). He was Private Secretary to his uncle, Lord Salisbury (1878 - 80) and travelled with him and Disraeli to Berlin. He was President of the Local Government Board (1885), Secretary for Scotland

(1886 - 87), Chief Secretary for Ireland (1887 - 91), First Lord of the Treasury (1891 - 92 and 1895 - 1902), Prime Minister (1902 - 5), and Lord Privy Seal (1902 - 3). He continued his ministerial career as First Lord of the Admiralty (1915 - 16), Foreign Secretary (1916 - 19), and Lord President of the Council (1919 - 22 and 1925 - 29). He was a Member of the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. In 1922, he was created the Earl of Balfour. He wrote A Defence of Philosophic Doubt (1879).

Bryce, James (1838 - 1922), was a fellow of Oriel College, Oxford (1862 - 89) and Regius Professor of Civil Law at Oxford (1870 - 93). He co-founded the English Historical Review (in 1886) and wrote The Holy Roman Empire (1873), The American Commonwealth (1888), and Studies in History and Jurisprudence (1901). He was a Liberal MP for Tower Hamlets (1880 - 85) and Aberdeen South (1885 - 1906). He was Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (1892 - 94), President of the Board of Trade (1894 - 95), Chief Secretary for Ireland (1905 - 07) and Ambassador to Washington (1907 - 13). He was created Viscount Bryce in 1914.

Campbell-Bannerman, Sir Henry (1836 - 1908), was a Liberal MP for the Stirling Burghs (1868 - 1908) and led the Liberal Party (1899 - 1908). He served as Financial Secretary at the War Office (1871 - 74, and 1880 - 82), Secretary to the Admiralty (1882 - 84), and Chief Secretary for Ireland (1884 - 85). In Cabinet, he was Secretary for War (1886 and 1892 - 95) and Prime Minister (1905 - 8).

Chamberlain, Joseph (1836 - 1914), a Radical, Unitarian screw manufacturer, was Mayor of Birmingham (1874 - 76) and MP for the city (1876 - 1914). In 1877, he founded the National Liberal Federation. He was President of the Board of Trade (1880 - 85) and President of Local Government Board (1886). He resigned as Gladstone prepared to introduce his first Home Rule Bill in 1886. Along with Hartington, he led the Liberal Unionist Party in the Commons. He later became Colonial Secretary (1895 - 1903) in the Salisbury/Balfour Cabinet until he resigned to campaign for tariff reform. He split the Tory Party in 1903 even more drastically than he had split the Liberal Party in 1886.

Crewe, Robert Offley Ashburton Crewe-Milnes (1858 - 1945), 1st Marquess of, was the son of Rosebery's close friend Lord Houghton and married Rosebery's daughter Lady Margaret Primrose in 1899. He succeeded his father as 2nd Baron Houghton in 1885. He was created Earl of Crewe in 1899, and Marquess in 1911. As Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1892 - 95), he hosted Rosebery on his first and only visit to Ireland. He was Lord President of the Council (1905 - 8 and 1915 - 16), Colonial Secretary (1908 - 10), Lord Privy Seal (1908 - 11 and 1912 - 15), Secretary for India (1910 - 15), and President of the Board of Education (1916). In 1929, he was charged with writing the official life of his father-in-law, which he published in 1931.

Cross, Sir Richard Assheton (1823 - 1914), was a Conservative MP for Preston (1857 - 62) and Southwest Lancashire (1868 - 86) until he was created Viscount Cross. He was Home Secretary (1874 - 80 and 1885 - 86), Secretary for India (1886 - 92) and Lord Privy Seal (1895 - 1900).

Dilke, Sir Charles Wentworth (1843 - 1911), wrote Greater Britain (1868) following a tour of the Colonies. He was a Radical (republican) MP for Chelsea (1868 - 86) and Forest of Dean (1892 - 1911). He was Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office (1880 - 82) and President of the Local Government Board (1882 - 85). In 1885, an adultery scandal effectively ruined his career, just as he seemed primed for advancement.

Disraeli, Benjamin (1804 - 1881), was a Conservative MP for Maidstone (1837 - 41), Shrewsbury (1841 - 47) and Buckinghamshire (1847 - 76). He wrote Vivian Grey (1826), Coningsby (1844), Sybil (1845), Lord George Bentinck: A Political Biography (1852), and Lothair (1870). He was Chancellor of the Exchequer (1852, 1858 - 59 and 1866 - 68), Prime Minster (1868 and 1874 - 80) and Lord Privy Seal (1876 - 78). In 1876, he was created Earl of Beaconsfield.

Forster, William Edward (1818 - 1886), [a former Quaker] was a Liberal MP for Bradford (1861 - 86). His Education Act (1870) alienated many Nonconformists and damaged his standing in the Liberal Party. He was Vice-President of the Council (1870 - 74) and Chief Secretary for Ireland (1880 - 82). He resigned this position in May, 1882 following Gladstone's 'Kilmainham Treaty' with Parnell and thereafter bitterly opposed Gladstone. He was the first President of the Imperial Federation League (1884 - 86).

Fowler, Sir Henry Hartley (1830 - 1911), [a Wesleyan] was Mayor of Wolverhampton (1863) and a Liberal MP for Wolverhampton (1880 - 1908). He was President of the Local Government Board (1892 - 94), Secretary for India (1894 - 95), Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (1905 - 8), and Lord President of the Council (1908 - 10). He was created Viscount Wolverhampton in 1908. He was a Vice-President of the Liberal League (1902 - 10).

Gladstone, William Ewart (1809 - 1898), was the son of a West Indian Merchant and slave-owner. He entered the first reformed Parliament in 1832 as a 'high Tory.' In Parliament, he sat for Newark (1832 - 45), the University of Oxford (1847 - 65), Lancashire South (1865 - 68), Greenwich (1868 - 80) and Midlothian (1880 - 95). He served as Under-Secretary for the Colonies (1835), and Vice-President of the Board of Trade (1841 - 43), President of the Board of Trade (1843 - 45), Secretary for the Colonies (1845 - 46), Chancellor of the Exchequer (1852 - 55, 1859 - 66, 1873 - 74 and 1880 - 82) and Prime Minister (1868 - 74, 1880 - 85, 1886, 1892 - 94).

Granville, George Leveson - Gower (1815 -1891), 2nd Earl, was a Liberal MP

for Morpeth (1837 - 40) and Lichfield (1841 - 46). One of Gladstone's closest friends and confidants, he was Foreign Secretary (1851 - 52, 1870 - 74 and 1880 - 85), President of the Council (1853) and Colonial Secretary (1868 - 70 and 1886).

Grey, Sir Edward (1862 - 1933), was a Liberal MP for Berwick (1885 - 1916). He was Rosebery's Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office (1892 - 95) and later Foreign Secretary (1905 - 16). He was a Vice-President of the Liberal League (1902 - 10). He was created Viscount Grey of Fallodon in 1916.

Haldane, Richard Burdon (1856 - 1928), was a Liberal MP for East Lothian (1885 - 1911). He was Secretary for War (1905 - 12) and Lord Chancellor (1912 - 15 and 1924). A Vice-president of the Liberal League (1905 - 10), he plotted for a Rosebery restoration. He was created Viscount Haldane of Cloan in 1911.

Harcourt, Lewis ('Loulou') Venables Vernon (1863 - 1922), was devoted to his father's career and served as his private secretary and intriguer. After his father's death, he was a Liberal MP for the Rossendale division of Lancashire (1904 - 17). He served as First Commissioner of Works (1905 - 10 and 1915 - 16) and Colonial Secretary (1910 - 15). In 1917, he was created Viscount Harcourt.

Harcourt, Sir William George Granville Venables Vernon (1827 - 1904), was a Liberal MP for Oxford (1868 - 80), Derby (1880 - 95) and West Monmouth (1895 - 1904). He was Solicitor General (1873 - 74), Home Secretary (1880 - 85) and Chancellor of the Exchequer (1886 and 1892 - 95). He led the Liberal Party in the Commons (1894 - 98) and the entire party (1896 - 98).

Hartington, Spencer Compton Cavendish (1833 - 1908), Marquess of, was MP for North Lancashire (1857 - 68), Radnor district (1869 - 80), North East Lancashire (1880 - 85) and for the Rossendale division of Lancashire (1885 - 91) until he succeeded his father as the 8th Duke of Devonshire. In 1877, with Rosebery's assistance, he was elected Lord Rector of the University of Edinburgh. In Cabinet, he served as Secretary for War (1866 and 1882 - 85), Postmaster General (1868 - 70), Chief Secretary for Ireland (1870 - 74) and Secretary for India (1880 - 82). In 1886, he became a Liberal Unionist and later served as Lord President of Council (1895 - 1903) and President of the Board of Education (1900 - 02).

Kimberley, John Wodehouse (1826 - 1902), 1st Earl of, served as Minister at St Petersburg (1856 - 58), Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1864 - 66), Lord Privy Seal (1868 - 70), Colonial Secretary (1870 - 74, 1880 - 82), Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (1882), Secretary for India (1882 - 85, 1886, 1892 - 94), Lord President of the Council (1892 - 94) and Foreign Secretary (1894 - 95).

Lansdowne, Henry Charles Keith Petty-Fitzmaurice (1845 - 1927), 5th Marquess of, was Rosebery's contemporary at Eton and Oxford. As a Whig, he was Under-Secretary for War (1872 - 74) and Under-Secretary for India (1880) but resigned in opposition to Gladstone's Irish policy. He later served as Governor General of Canada (1883 - 88), Viceroy of India (1888 - 93), Secretary for War (1895 - 1900), Foreign Secretary (1900 - 5) and a Minister without Portfolio (1915 - 16).

Marjoribanks, Edward (1849 - 1909), was educated at Harrow and Christ Church, Oxford where he was Rosebery's contemporary. In 1873, he married Lady Fanny Churchill, the sister of Lord Randolph. He was a Liberal MP for Berwickshire (1880 - 94) and Chief Liberal Whip (1892 - 94) until he succeeded his father as Lord Tweedmouth. He was Lord Privy Seal and Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster (1894 - 95), First Lord of the Admiralty (1905 - 08) and Lord President of Council (1908). He was active in the Scottish Liberal Party and an avowed opponent to Scottish Home Rule, the Liberal League and Liberal Imperialism.

Morley, John (1838 - 1923), edited the Fortnightly Review (1867 - 82) and Pall Mall Gazette (1880 - 83) and wrote monographs on Burke, Cobden, Rousseau, Cromwell and his monumental Life of Gladstone (1903). He was a Radical MP for Newcastle on Tyne (1883 - 95) and the Montrose Burghs (1896 - 1908). He was Chief Secretary for Ireland (1886 and 1892 - 95), Secretary for India (1905 - 10) and Lord President of the Council (1910 - 14). He was created Viscount Morley of Blackburn in 1908.

Richmond and Gordon, Charles Henry (1818 - 1903), 6th Duke of, was a Conservative MP for West Sussex (1841 - 60). He was President of the Poor Law Board (1859), President of the Board of Trade (1867 - 68), Lord President of the Council (1874 - 80 and 1885) and Secretary for Scotland (1885 - 86).

Salisbury, Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-Cecil (1830 - 1903), 3rd Marquess of, was Secretary for India (1866 - 67) until he resigned in protest over Disraeli's Reform Act. He later served as Secretary for India (1874 - 78), Foreign Secretary (1878 - 80, 1885, 1887 - 92, and 1895 - 1900), Prime Minister (1885, 1886 - 92 and 1895 - 1902) and Lord Privy Seal (1900 - 2).

Spencer, John Poyntz (1835 - 1910), 5th Earl ['the Red Earl'], was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1868 - 74 and 1882 - 85), Lord President of the Council (1880 - 82 and 1886) and First Lord of the Admiralty (1892 - 95). He remained faithful to Gladstone after 1886 and was Gladstone's preferred successor.

Trevelyan, Sir George Otto (1838 - 1928), was Macaulay's nephew. He was a Liberal MP for Tynemouth (1865 - 68), Hawick (1868 - 86) and the Bridgeton division of Glasgow (1887 - 97). He was Secretary for Ireland (1882 - 84) following Lord Frederick Cavendish's assassination. In the Cabinet, he was

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancashire (1884 - 85) and Secretary for Scotland (1886) until he resigned in opposition to Irish Home Rule. He rejoined Gladstone after the Roundtable Conference in 1887 and again served as Secretary for Scotland (1892 - 95). He wrote The Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay (1876) and The Early Life of Charles James Fox (1880).

Appendix 2. Liberal Cabinets 1868 - 1895

GLADSTONE'S FIRST CABINET

December 1868 - February 1874

First Lord of the Treasury: William Ewart Gladstone
Lord Chancellor: Lord Hatherley (resigned October 1872)
Lord Selbourne (from October 1872)
Lord President: Earl de Grey [cr. Marquess of Ripon 1871] (resigned August 1873)
H. A. Bruce [cr. Lord Aberdare] (from August 1873)
Lord Privy Seal: Earl of Kimberley (to July 1870)
Lord Halifax (from July 1870)
Chancellor of the Exchequer: Robert Lowe (to August 1873)
W. E. Gladstone (from August 1873)
Home Secretary: H. A. Bruce (to August 1873)
Robert Lowe (from August 1873)
Foreign Secretary: Earl of Clarendon (died July 1870)
Earl Granville (from July 1870)
Colonial Secretary: Earl Granville (to July 1870)
Earl of Kimberley (from July 1870)
Secretary for War: E. Cardwell
Secretary for India: Duke of Argyll
First Lord of the Admiralty: H. C. E. Childers (resigned March 1871)
G. J. Goschen (from March 1871)
President of the Board of Trade: John Bright (resigned December 1870)
Chichester Fortescue (from December 1870)
Chief Secretary for Ireland: Chichester Fortescue (to December 1870)
Marquess of Hartington (from Dec. 1870)
Postmaster General: Marquess of Hartington (to December 1870)
President of the Poor Law Board: G. J. Goschen (to March 1871)
James Stansfeld (from March 1871)
Vice President (Education): W. E. Forster (in Cabinet from July 1870)
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster: H. C. E. Childers (from August 1872 to September 1873 [resigned])
John Bright (from September 1873)

GLADSTONE'S SECOND CABINET

April 1880 - June 1885

First Lord of the Treasury: W. E. Gladstone
Chancellor of the Exchequer: W. E. Gladstone (to December 1882)
H. C. E. Childers (from December 1882)
Lord Chancellor: Lord Selbourne [created Earl Selbourne 1881]
Lord President: Earl Spencer (to March 1883)
Lord Carlingford [Chichester Fortescue](from March 1883)

Lord Privy Seal: Duke of Argyll (resigned May 1881)
Lord Carlingford (from May 1881 to February 1885)
Earl of Rosebery (from February 1885)
Home Secretary: Sir William Vernon Harcourt
Foreign Secretary: Earl Granville
Colonial Secretary: Earl of Kimberley (to December 1882)
Earl of Derby (from December 1882)
Secretary for War: H. C. E. Childers (to December 1882)
Marquess of Hartington (from December 1882)
Secretary for India: Marquess of Hartington (to December 1882)
Earl of Kimberley (from December 1882)
First Lord of the Admiralty: Earl of Northbrook
President of the Board of Trade: Joseph Chamberlain
President of the Local Government Board: J. G. Dodson (to Dec. 1882)
Sir Charles Dilke (from December 1882)
Chief Secretary for Ireland: W. E. Forster (resigned April 1882)[1]
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster: John Bright (resigned July 1882)
Earl of Kimberley (July to Dec. 1882)
J. G. Dodson (from December 1882 to October 1884 [resigned])
G. O. Trevelyan (from October 1884)
Viceroy of Ireland: Earl Spencer (from April 1882)
First Commissioner of Works: Earl of Rosebery (from February 1885)
Postmaster General: G. J. Shaw-Lefevre (from February 1885)

GLADSTONE'S THIRD CABINET

February 1886 - August 1886

First Lord of the Treasury & Lord Privy Seal: W. E. Gladstone
Lord Chancellor: Lord Herschell
Lord President: Earl Spencer
Chancellor of the Exchequer: Sir William Vernon Harcourt
Home Secretary: H. C. E. Childers
Foreign Secretary: Earl of Rosebery
Colonial Secretary: Earl Granville
Secretary for War: Henry Campbell-Bannerman
Secretary for India: Earl of Kimberley
Secretary for Scotland: G. O. Trevelyan (resigned April 1886)
Chief Secretary for Ireland: John Morley
First Lord of the Admiralty: Marquess of Ripon

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[1] Lord Frederick Cavendish then became Irish Secretary. Following Cavendish's assassination on May 6, 1882, G. O. Trevelyan filled the post. Neither Trevelyan nor Cavendish was in the Cabinet.

President of the Board of Trade: A. J. Mundella
President of the Local Government Board: J. Chamberlain (resigned April 1886)
J. Stansfeld (from April 1886)

GLADSTONE'S FOURTH CABINET

August 1892 - March 1894

First Lord of the Treasury & Lord Privy Seal: W. E. Gladstone
Lord Chancellor: Lord Herschell
Lord President & Secretary for India: Earl of Kimberley
Chancellor of the Exchequer: Sir William Vernon Harcourt
Home Secretary: H. H. Asquith
Foreign Secretary: Earl of Rosebery
Colonial Secretary: Marquess of Ripon
Secretary for War: Henry Campbell-Bannerman
Secretary for Scotland: Sir G. O. Trevelyan (suc. Baronet 1886)
Chief Secretary for Ireland: John Morley
First Lord of the Admiralty: Earl Spencer
President of the Board of Trade: A. J. Mundella
President of the Local Government Board: H. H. Fowler
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster: James Bryce
Vice President (Education): A. H. D. Acland
First Commissioner of Works: G. J. Shaw-Lefevre
Postmaster General: Arnold Morley

ROSEBERY'S FIRST AND ONLY CABINET

March 1894 - June 1895

First Lord of the Treasury & Lord President: Earl of Rosebery
Lord Chancellor: Lord Herschell
Lord Privy Seal & Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster: Lord Tweedmouth
Chancellor of the Exchequer: Sir William Vernon Harcourt
Home Secretary: H. H. Asquith
Foreign Secretary: Earl of Kimberley
Colonial Secretary: Marquess of Ripon
Secretary for War: Henry Campbell-Bannerman
Secretary for India: H. H. Fowler
Secretary for Scotland: Sir G. O. Trevelyan
Chief Secretary for Ireland: John Morley
First Lord of the Admiralty: Earl Spencer
President of the Board of Trade: James Bryce
President of the Local Government Board: G. J. Shaw-Lefevre
Vice President (Education): A. H. D. Acland
Postmaster General: Arnold Morley

Appendix 3. Note on the Rosebery Papers

In 1966, Lord Primrose, later the 7th Earl of Rosebery, donated 216 manuscript volumes which had previously belonged to his grandfather, the 5th Earl of Rosebery, to the National Library of Scotland. The archive is expertly indexed and is a rich source of documentary evidence for Scottish, Imperial and foreign affairs in Victorian and Edwardian Britain. The Rosebery collection consists of,

Papers of the 5th Earl of Rosebery (MSS 10,001 - 10194)
Crewe Papers (MSS 10,195 - 205)
Cleveland Papers (MSS 10,206 - 10216)
Durdans Books (MSS 10,217 - 10,241)
Additional Rosebery Papers (MSS 10,250 - 10,253)
Rosebery Literary MSS (Accession 8365)
Rosebery - Lord Randolph Churchill Papers (Accession 8654)

This collection, however, does not represent the entirety of the extent Rosebery Papers. The present earl retains Rosebery's diaries which Rosebery maintained intermittently throughout his life. Permission to consult this diary has been restricted. Lord Crewe and Robert Rhodes James frequently quote from the diaries and Dr. Colin Matthew was given permission to consult the diaries for the years 1881 - 1886 for the publication of The Gladstone Diaries. Where appropriate references will be made to these extracts, though I have not personally examined the diaries.[1]

Both Crewe and Rhodes James indicated it was a continual challenge to account for all of Rosebery's existing papers which were divided between his many houses. This challenge continues to this day. As late as 1989, the National Register of Archives (Scotland) conducted an additional survey of the Rosebery Papers at Dalmeny and discovered more than 95 bundles of personal and political papers concerning the 5th Earl.[2] In addition, after his death, Rosebery's daughter, Lady Sybil Grant took several dozen manuscript items from her father's papers, with the probable intention of editing and publishing them. These items included Rosebery's literary journals in which he discussed his extensive reading interests, as well as several letters from

[1] I would like to express my gratitude to Dr Colin Matthew and the Countess of Rosebery for their kind permission to consult and to make use of the notes taken by Dr Matthew.

[2] Regrettably, after several attempts to gain permission from the NRA (Scotland) and the Rosebery family, it was reported that these documents are currently unable to be located and consequently can not be consulted. A detailed hand-list is located in NRA (S), survey 2244.

Lord Randolph Churchill to Rosebery.[3] Only in recent years have these items been returned to National Library of Scotland. Consequently, they are not listed with the main Rosebery Papers.

In addition, not all of Rosebery's personal papers have survived. From indications in both biographies and in some notes in the manuscripts themselves, it is apparent that large sections of the papers have been destroyed. All letters between Lord and Lady Rosebery were burned by Rosebery after the Countess's death and only a few incoming letters to Lady Rosebery are preserved in the National Library's collection. Rosebery burnt the bulk of his mother's correspondence after her death and following Rosebery's death, Lord and Lady Crewe (Rosebery's daughter) sorted through his letters discarding those which were merely personal. To give but one example of the limitation of the papers, over 900 letters from Rosebery to his sister Constance are preserved in the West Sussex Record Office, while only two letters from Constance survive in Rosebery's papers.

Rosebery retained some copies of his own letters,[4] but otherwise, his outgoing letters and memoranda are scattered throughout England, Scotland, Wales and the United States. The Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts lists over seventy entries for Lord Rosebery in its computerized database. All of the major collections have been consulted, but the known existing letters represent but a fraction of his total correspondence. Rosebery's correspondence with his leading Scottish advisers - Cooper, Donaldson, Ivory, Munro-Ferguson, Patten, and Richardson - cannot be traced.[5] Therefore, his activities have been pieced together largely through his incoming letters.

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[3] In Lord Randolph Churchill [pp. 4 - 5], Foster asked, "Why is there a twenty-year gap from 1868 to 1888 in Churchill's letters to Rosebery?" The letters in Accession 8654 help to fill some of that gap.

[4] Two letter books (MSS 10130 and 10131) covering the period 1894 - 1902 were maintained and are particularly valuable.

[5] Cooper's papers presumably perished in a fire at The Scotsman's office. Donaldson's papers are preserved in the Library at the University of St Andrews - but remarkably no letters from Rosebery are included in this collection. It appears that Munro-Ferguson's letters were destroyed after Rosebery's death [RP, MS 10195, f. 228, Munro-Ferguson to Crewe dated October 22, 1929]. The papers of Ivory, Patten and Richardson are not known to exist.

Bibliography

Plan of Bibliography:

A. Manuscripts

B. Newspapers and Periodicals

C. Published Primary Works

   1. Lord Rosebery
   2. Nationalist Publications
   3. Official Papers
   4. Other Primary Works

D. Secondary Works

   1. Lord Rosebery
   2. Works of Reference
   3. Nationalism
   4. Biographies
   5. Other Secondary Works and Articles
   6. Unpublished Theses

A. MANUSCRIPTS

National Library of Scotland

Rosebery MSS

Blackie, John Stuart MSS
Buchan, John MSS
Haldane, R. B. MSS
Kimberley MSS
Minto MSS
Reid, John J. MSS
Scottish Liberal Club MSS

British Library

Battersea MSS
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir Henry MSS
Dilke, Sir Charles W. MSS
Gladstone, Herbert MSS [Viscount Gladstone]
Gladstone, Mary MSS
Gladstone, William Ewart MSS
Hamilton, Sir Edward Walter MSS
Kilbracken MSS [Arthur Godley]
Northcliffe MSS [Alfred Harmsworth]
Ripon MSS
Spender, J. A. MSS

Bodleian Library, Oxford

Bryce, James MSS
Disraeli, Benjamin MSS
Fisher, H. A. L. MSS
Harcourt, Lewis Vernon [later Viscount Harcourt] MSS
Harcourt, Sir William Vernon MSS

Churchill College, Cambridge

Churchill, Lord Randolph MSS
Churchill, Winston S. MSS
Esher, MSS [Reginald Brett]
Stead, W. T. MSS

Edinburgh University Library

Dick, James MSS

Edinburgh University MSS
Scottish Liberal Association MSS

House of Lords Record Office

Brand MSS [Speaker of the House of Lords]
Gosse, Edmund MSS [Librarian of the House of Lords]
Lloyd George, David MSS
Samuel, Herbert MSS

Scottish Record Office

Balfour, Arthur James MSS
Lord Advocate MSS
Scottish Office MSS

West Sussex Record Office

Maxse, Leo MSS
Petworth House MSS [Constance, Lady Leconfield]
Richmond and Gordon MSS

Other Collections

Carnegie, Andrew MSS, Library of Congress
Chamberlain, Joseph MSS, Birmingham University Library
Crewe MSS, Cambridge University Library
Devonshire MSS [Lord Hartington], Chatsworth House
Eton Society MSS ["Pop" Debates], Eton College Library
Garvin, J. L. MSS, University of Texas (Austin)
Gladstone, William Ewart and Catherine MSS, Hawarden
Granville MSS, Public Record Office
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Edinburgh Review
Eton Chronicle
Eton Observer
Eton Scrapbook
Evergreen: A Northern Seasonal
The Fiery Cross
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The Glasgow Herald
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